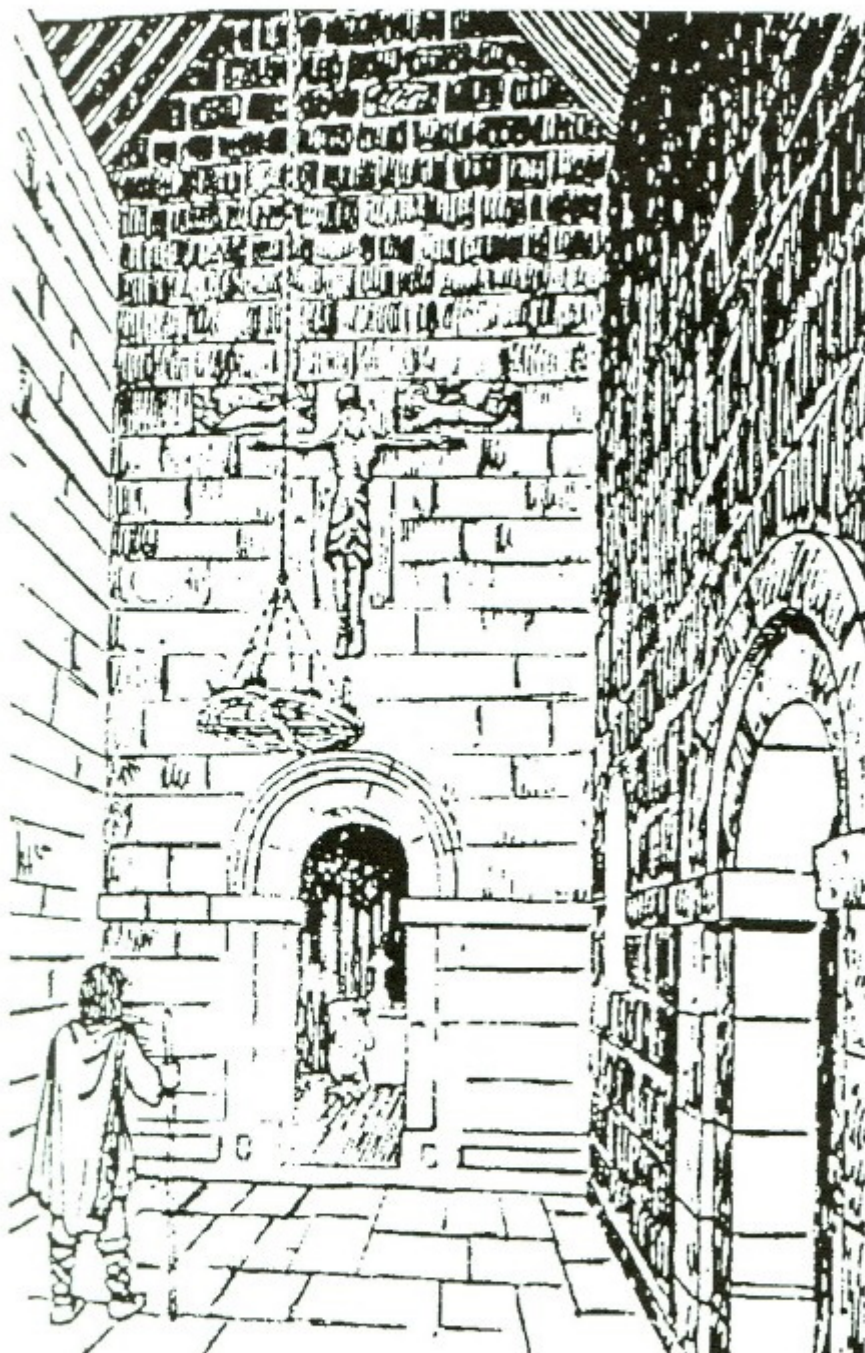


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# LIVING ORTHODOXY

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Glory be to God! As all our readers are no doubt aware, just as this issue goes to press it has been announced that the United States Supreme Court has upheld the Missouri statute which forbids the use of public money to finance the continuing murders of infants before their births. Let us all pray that this is only the first of steps in a direction consonant with the will of God, and that this mass infanticide will soon be brought to a total and permanent halt. Our task now lies with the state legislatures as well as with the Supreme Court. Let every believer do what he/she can to bring this about.

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**VOL. X, NO. 5 (#59)  
SEPT-OCT 1988**





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**Vol. X, No. 5; Sept-Oct 1988 (#59)**  
(actual release July 1989)

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## THE LIFE OF THE HOLY HIERARCH DIMITRI, METROPOLITAN OF ROSTOV, THE WONDERWORKER

WHOSE MEMORY THE HOLY CHURCH CELEBRATES ON THE 21ST OF SEPTEMBER & THE 28TH OF OCTOBER

The holy hierarch Dimitri, who received the name Daniel in holy baptism, was born in December of 1651, in the village of Makarov, which is located about 27 miles from the city of Kiev. His father, Savva Grigorievich Tuptalo, a simple Cossack by birth, served in the military and achieved the rank of centurion [equivalent to lieutenant] before retirement. Afterwards, he dedicated the rest of his days to the service of the Church, accepting the position of trustee of the Monastery of St. Cyril. He and his wife, Maria Mikhailovna, were pious folk who led a good Christian life. Savva Grigorievich was continually being called away from home on military business, and the young Daniel was raised primarily under the guidance of his mother. The saint himself recalled her with tender affection and praise when he spoke of her repose: "On Great Friday itself, the day of the Savior's Passion, my mother reposed at the ninth hour of the day, that very hour at which our Savior, suffering for our salvation, surrendered His spirit into the hands of God. She was more than seventy years of age.... May the Lord remember her in His heavenly kingdom! She reposed with a cheerful disposition, a clear mind and the ability to speak. O that the Lord might count me worthy of such a blessed end by her supplications! And truly, her end was that of a Christian, for, fortified by all the Christian rites and the customary mysteries, she was without fear, unashamed, peaceful. May the Lord vouchsafe unto her a good answer at His dread judgment! I have no doubt of the mercy of God and of her salvation, cognizant of her constantly virtuous and godly life. And as a good sight of her salvation I have the fact of the time and hour of her repose—when Christ the Lord, during His voluntary Passion, opened paradise to the thief. At that same hour He commanded that her soul depart from her body." Under the influence of such a virtuous mother, the young Daniel grew in the fear of God and piety, ascending from strength to strength, fortified by the virtues.

Daniel received his primary education at home. His parents taught him to read, and when he reached the age of eleven, they sent him to the School of the Kiev Brotherhood. Thanks to exceptional abilities and an ardent zeal for his studies, Daniel soon began to excel in all subjects and surpassed all his peers. In rhetoric classes he drew particular attention to himself because of his skill in composing poetry and orations. Under the direction of Joannicius Galyatinsky, a famous preacher and polemic theologian, Daniel learned to perfection the methods of elocution

which were later to leave such an impression on those who heard him teach, and he acquired that energy and invincible power of persuasion which were in evidence when he afterwards had to engage in polemical debate with those who had separated themselves from the Church. Yet, while Daniel excelled in scholarly pursuits, at the same time he showed evidence of a remarkable character and early displayed an inclination to a life of contemplation and asceticism. He took no part in childish games and avoided all pleasures and amusements. His time free from his studies he devoted to church, where he reverently offered up fervent prayers to the Lord. The more often and assiduously he read the divine Scriptures and the lives of the holy Fathers, the more the desire intensified within his soul to emulate those who pleased God.

When he was fifteen, Daniel had to leave the school. At this unfortunate time, Kiev was passing back and forth between Polish and Russian control. This had its effect even upon the School, which was totally disbanded in 1665, during Polish domination, and remained closed for a long time. Daniel, therefore, was unable to complete the course of study and had to cut short his scholarly studies after having finished only three years.

Inclined toward the monastic life from his youth, Daniel forsook this world and all its allurements soon after leaving school. Asking his parents' blessing, at the age of eighteen he went to live in the Monastery of St. Cyril. The monastery's abbot, Meletius (Dzik) had known Daniel for a long time, since he had previously been the rector of the Kievan Academy. On July 9th, 1668, Daniel received the monastic tonsure and the new name Demetrius (Dimitri). The newly tonsured monk entrusted himself wholly to the will and providence of God. He began to observe all the monastic regulations strictly and without deviation, and zealously, in humility and obedience, he took his turn at all the monastic tasks. With all his strength he strove to emulate the venerable Anthony and Theodosius, and all the other ascetics of the Caves, in the virtues. He took care not to acquire possessions and money, but tried to please God with all his soul, to serve him faithfully and wholeheartedly, and thus to acquire for himself treasure in heaven.

Less than a year passed from the time of Dimitri's tonsure when, at the request of the abbot, he was ordained hierodeacon. This ordination took place on the feast of the Annunciation of the all-holy Theotokos, March 25th 1669, and was performed by Archbishop Joseph (Tukal'sky) of

Moghila, who was resident in the city of Kanev at that time. Hierodeacon Dimitri remained in the Monastery of St. Cyril for a long time. He submitted in all things to the abbot, served the brethren humbly and assiduously, fulfilled every obedience without fail, and was always the first to arrive in church and the last to leave. In church, he stood with fear, paying reverent attention to the words of the Sacred Scriptures; and in his cell he often prayed, wrote and did what task the abbot assigned him, and diligently continued his scholarly pursuits.

Thus did Dimitri struggle unto the year 1675. At that time, Archbishop Lazarus (Baranovich) of Chernigov was staying at the Gustynsky Monastery. There the holy Dimitri was presented to him for ordination to the priesthood, which took place on May 23rd, the feast of the Holy Spirit. Saint Dimitri was at that time only 24 years of age, yet he had already achieved great skill in preaching the word of God. Becoming more closely acquainted with him and perceiving his high spiritual qualities, the Archbishop invited the holy one to be the homilist at Chernigov's cathedral. For more than two years, the saint preached in the cathedral and in other churches of the Chernigov Diocese. Teaching the people the law of Christ, he brought great profit to all who listened to him and afforded them great spiritual pleasure. His lively and absorbing speech was seasoned with the salt of wisdom, so that all flocked to listen to him.

Saint Dimitri's fame as a great preacher quickly spread throughout Little Russia [the Ukraine] and Lithuania, and monastery after monastery began to invite him to visit them, that they might benefit from his eloquent and edifying discourse. The proximate cause for such invitations was the following event. In June of 1677, moved by pious fervor, the holy Dimitri left Chernigov and travelled to the Novodvorsky Monastery near Pinsk, to venerate the wonderworking icon of the Mother of God which had been painted by Saint Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow. At the time when the holy one arrived, the monastics of that house were preparing for the solemn transferral of the icon from the old church to the new. Bishop Theodosius of Byelorussia and Clement, superior of Vilna's Monastery of the Holy Spirit, also arrived to take part in this occasion. After the celebration was concluded, Clement took Dimitri with him to his monastery. The saint stayed in Vilna for more than two months and delivered a number of sermons. Soon, however, at the request of Bishop Theodosius, the holy Dimitri travelled to Slutsk and, settling in the Bratsky Monastery of the Transfiguration, he labored untiringly for fourteen months in preaching the word of God. John Skochkevich, a trustee of the monastery, who had funded the monastery's construction, developed considerable affection for the young zealot of piety and became his bene-

factor. Saint Dimitri likewise respected and loved his patron; he remained in Slutsk until the latter's repose, and honored his memory by delivering the eulogy at his burial.

Meanwhile, the holy one received a continuous stream of invitations for him to return to Little Russia. Such invitations were made by the hetman Ivan Samoilovich, as well as by his former abbot Meletius, who was now administrator of the Monastery of St. Michael in Kiev. In February of 1679, Saint Dimitri arrived in Baturin, where the hetman resided, and was there received kindly and affectionately by the hetman himself. Lodging at the Krutitsky Monastery of St. Nicholas, not far from Baturin, the saint continued to struggle zealously in fasting, prayer and the continual reading of spiritually profitable books; and he preached the word of God with particular ardor. The fame of his virtuous life spread to all the monasteries. Many of them invited the saint to visit and guide them. Thus, the brethren of the Monastery of St. Cyril earnestly besought him to take them under his rule. But the holy Dimitri, in his humility, and doubtless restrained by the hetman, declined their request and sent the Monastery of St. Cyril a letter of thanks. Soon after this, in 1681, the abbot of the Maksakov Monastery of the Transfiguration reposed. The brethren also entreated the holy Dimitri, asking him to become their abbot. Thanks to its solitary situation, the Maksakov Monastery could not have corresponded better to the strict ascetic life of the young struggler for piety. Therefore, with the consent of the hetman, he accepted the offer of the Maksakov monks and, supplied by the hetman with a letter, he set out to see Archbishop Lazarus (Baranovich) to obtain a decree.

The archbishop received Dimitri with great kindness. As though foreseeing the future, Lazarus said to Dimitri as soon as he broke the seal on the hetman's letter: "Without reading this letter, I say to you: may the Lord God bless you not only with the abbacy, but, in accordance with your name Dimitri, I wish for you a miter. Let Dimitri receive a miter!" The same day, after elevating the saint to the abbacy, Lazarus greeted Dimitri with the following words: "Today we commemorate the God-seeing prophet Moses; today the Lord God hath counted you worthy of the abbacy in a monastery whose church is dedicated to the Transfiguration of the Lord, like Moses on Tabor. May He Who revealed His ways unto Moses likewise reveal to you at that Tabor His paths to the everlasting Tabor." "These words," Saint Dimitri himself bears witness, "I, a sinner, took for a good omen and prophecy, and I marked them for myself. God grant that the prophecy of His archpastor be fulfilled!" As the saint was departing the following day, Lazarus presented him with a beautiful staff as a present. "He bade me farewell as would a father his son," says the saint; "O Lord, grant Him all good things, according to his heart!"



When he took up the administration of his monastery, the holy Dimitri did not alter his former strictly monastic life in the least. Struggling as before in vigils of prayer and good works, he provided an example of Christian humility for all. Ever mindful of the words of the Lord: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant" [Mt. 20: 26], he lived the way he taught others to live, serving all as a model of faith and piety. It is beyond doubt that such abbots are the glory and adornments of the monasteries they rule. This is why the saint did not remain long in any one monastery, but was, as we shall see, transferred from one to another.

The Maksakov monks did not enjoy the edification afforded by the discourse and holy life of their venerable abbot for long. On March 1st 1682, he was appointed abbot of the Monastery of St. Nicholas in Baturin. But he himself resigned from that post shortly. He desired a peaceful life of inner stillness, that he might give himself over to divine contemplation, prayer and other God-pleasing pursuits without distraction. Hence, in the second year of his abbacy in Baturin, on October 26th, 1683, the feast of his patron saint, he stepped down as abbot, electing to remain a simple monk in that community. Before long, however, in accordance with God's providence, the holy one was called to the great task of compiling the Lives of the Saints, whereby he has benefitted the whole land of Russia beyond measure.

In 1684, Barlaam (Yasinsky) was appointed archimandrite of the Lavra of the Kiev Caves. From his predecessors, Peter (Moghila) and Innocent (Gizel') he inherited with his title of archimandrite the thought of the great labor of compiling the lives of the saints. The labor was even more essential in that, as a consequence of the invasions of the Tartars and the depredations of the Lithuanians and Poles, the Church had been deprived of many precious spiritual books and biographies of the saints. Searching for a man capable of undertaking this important and great task, Barlaam let his attention rest upon the holy Dimitri, who had already achieved fame by his zeal for soul-saving works. This choice was approved unanimously by the rest of the fathers and brethren of the Lavra. Then Barlaam requested of Dimitri that he move his residence to the Lavra of the Kiev Caves and undertake the correction and compilation of the hagiographic anthology.

Daunted by the difficulties of the task laid upon him, the humble ascetic attempted to decline. But, afraid lest he sin by disobedience and knowing well the needs of the Church, he preferred to submit to the insistence of the archimandrite. Placing his trust in the help of God and the supplications of the all-pure Theotokos and all the saints, in June of 1684 the holy one commenced his new labor and began to carry out the obedience assigned to him with great

diligence. His soul, filled with images of the saints with whose biographies he was concerning himself, was counted worthy to receive spiritual visions while he slept; these strengthened him to tread the path leading to higher spiritual perfection and provided him with the stamina to carry out his great labors.

"On Monday, August 10th of 1685," Saint Dimitri himself recounts, "I heard the bells ring for matins; but oversleeping, in my usual slothfulness, I did not arrive at the beginning of the service, but slept until the Psalter was read. At that time I beheld the following vision:

"It seemed to me that I was shown a certain cave in which holy relics rested. Examining the tombs of the saints by the light of a torch, I saw, as it were, the holy great-martyr Barbara lying there. As I approached her tomb, I saw her lying on her side, and her grave giving off a sort of putrescence. I wanted to cleanse it, and removed the relics from the coffer and set them in another place. When I had purified the shrine, I approached the relics and took them in my arms to set back in their coffer; but suddenly it seemed to me that Saint Barbara came to life. 'Holy martyr Barbara, my benefactor! Entreat God for me, because of my sins!' I cried. The saint replied, as though in some doubt: 'I know not whether I shall pray, for thou prayest in the Roman manner.' I think she said this to me because I am so slothful in prayer and in this have made myself like unto the Romans, whose prayers are exceedingly brief; for my prayers also are short and infrequent. When I heard the saint utter these words, I began to grieve and almost to despair. But after a short while, the holy one gazed at me, her face suffused with gladness and wreathed with smiles, and said: 'Fear not!' and spake other such words of consolation which I do not now remember. Then, setting her in the shrine, I kissed her hands and feet; it seemed as though her body was alive and quite white, but her shrine was poor and decrepit. Sorrowful because I dared to touch the holy relics with my impure and defiled hands and lips, and that her shrine was of such bad workmanship, I bethought me how to adorn her coffer and began to search for a new and more richly wrought shrine in which the holy relics might be placed; but at that moment I suddenly awoke. Sorry that I had awakened, my heart nevertheless was filled with joy." And concluding his account, the holy Dimitri humbly notes: "God knoweth what this dream signifieth, and what occurrence would follow it! O that, through the supplications of the holy Barbara, God might grant me emendation of my evil and wretched life!"

Another vision during sleep took place three or four months after the first, as follows: "One night in 1685, during the Nativity Fast," writes Saint Dimitri, "having finished recording the account of the sufferings of the holy



martyr Orestes, who is commemorated on November 10th, an hour or so before matins I lay down to rest without undressing, and in a vision during sleep I beheld the holy martyr Orestes, his face full of gladness, who addressed to me the following words: 'I endured more torments for Christ than thou hast recorded.' And when he said this, he uncovered his shoulders and showed me a great wound in his left side, which penetrated to his inner organs; and he said: 'Here they ran me through with a sword.' Then, baring his right arm to the elbow, he showed me a wound directly opposite the elbow, and said: 'Here thou canst see the sinews which were cut through.' Likewise baring his left arm, he disclosed a similar wound, saying: 'Here also they cut through the tendons.' Then, stooping down, he uncovered his legs and showed me wounds on his knees, saying: 'They cut through here with a wheel.' And, standing erect, he looked me in the face, and said: 'Seest thou? I endured more for Christ than thou hast recorded.' Not daring to say anything against this, I kept silent and thought to myself: 'Who is this Orestes who is not one of the five martyrs commemorated on December 13th?' And, reading my thought, the holy martyr replied: 'I am not the Orestes of the five, but another, whose life thou hast now written.' I saw another man, of important mien, standing behind him, and he also seemed to me to be a martyr, but he uttered not a word. At that moment the bells rang to signal the beginning of matins; and I woke up and was sorry that this pleasant vision had come to an end so soon. And that I, unworthy and sinful though I am, did truly behold this vision as I have written, and in no other way, I swear with a priestly oath; for I recall it perfectly, as I did when it happened."

More than two years passed from the time when the holy Dimitri resigned his abbacy and began his great labor in his solitary cell. It happened that he found himself with Archimandrite Barlaam in Baturin. He was joyously welcomed by the hetman and the new Metropolitan Gideon; and they began to urge him to take up again the governance of the Monastery of Saint Nicholas. Long did the saint refuse this, but finally he had to yield to their earnest entreaties, and on February 9th, 1686, he moved to Baturin. Yet even though he had departed from the Lavra of the Caves, he did not leave his work, but continued to compile the lives of the saints with the same zeal he showed at the Lavra, and there he completed the first quarter of the Lives, consisting of the months of September, October and November, and presented his work to Archimandrite Barlaam. When he and the elders of the Lavra and other knowledgeable men had read through the manuscript, Barlaam proceeded with the printing of the Lives of the Saints. The holy Dimitri arrived from Baturin at the Lavra, and under his personal supervision the first

volume of the Lives of the Saints was printed in 1689.

Soon after this, the saint found occasion to journey to Moscow. Prince Basil Vasilievich Golitsyn sent the Hetman Ivan Stepanovich Mazepa to Moscow with a report on the conclusion of the campaign in the Crimea. Accompanying the hetman were Saint Dimitri and Innocent, Abbot of the Monastery of Saint Cyril, who were sent along to discuss certain ecclesiastical matters with the patriarch. This was on July 21st, 1689. On their arrival in Moscow, they were presented to Tsar Ivan Alexeevich and the Tsarevna Sophia, and to Patriarch Joachim on the same day. A month after their arrival, Saint Dimitri and the hetman were at the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra. Tsar Peter Alexeevich was in residence there at the time, hiding from the Tsarevna Sophia, who had made attempts on his life. The Tsar received the godly monk with kindness. At the Lavra, the holy one had occasion to see the patriarch. "We visited him often," the saint himself said; "He blessed me, a sinner, to continue recording the lives of the saints and gave me as a blessing an icon of the all-holy Theotokos with a metal covering."

On returning to his monastery, the holy Dimitri began to labor over the compilation of the lives of the saints with yet greater zeal. That this work on his God-pleasing task might proceed smoothly, he left his abbatial residence and had a special cell built for himself near the solitary Church of Saint Nicholas Krupitsky, which he refers to as his 'skete' in his writings."

While he was laboring over the second volume of the Lives of the Saints, Hadrian, the new Patriarch of Moscow, sent him a certificate of recognition. This certificate was brought by Archimandrite Barlaam, who was elevated and consecrated Metropolitan of Kiev in Moscow, on August 31st, 1690. "May God Himself," wrote the patriarch, "recompense thee, brother, with every gracious blessing, recording thee in the book of everlasting life for thy God-pleasing labors in the writings, correction and printing of the books of the spiritually profitable Lives of the Saints of the first three months—September, October and November. May He also bless, strengthen and enable thee to labor unto the completion of the entire year, to correct completely the rest of the Lives of the Saints, and to see them into print." At the same time, the patriarch asked the new metropolitan and the future archimandrite of the Lavra to coöperate with the holy Dimitri, "that skilled, prudent and pious laborer." Encouraged by the patriarch's attention, Saint Dimitri replied to the primate of the Russian Church with humble gratitude: "Let God be praised and glorified, Who is glorified in and by the saints, for He hath now given to His Holy Church a good and skillful shepherd, Your Archpastorship, Who at the beginning of your pastorate dost take care and thought first of all for the



increase of the glory of God and His saints, desiring that their lives be printed for the world to read, unto the benefit of all the Christian Orthodox Russian people. This glory is for all His saints. Now I, though unworthy, shall, with God's help, set my simple and sinful hand with greater zeal to the task which lieth before me, having Your Hierarchy supporting me and your blessing strengthening and guiding me, which greatly bestirreth me, that fending off the sleep of slothfulness, I may zealously do that which I have been commanded. And though I am not skilled and lack the knowledge and capability to bring the incipient work to a good conclusion, yet must I bear the yoke of holy obedience imposed upon me for Jesus Who strengtheneth me, from Whom we have all received fulfillment, and continue to receive it. May your God-pleasing supplication of Your Archpastorate aid me also in the future with your blessing, wherein I place my fervent hope."

The holy Dimitri then decided to dedicate himself exclusively to the Lives of the Saints. "On February 14th [1692]," he relates, "during the first week of the Great Fast, before the liturgy, I resigned and set aside my abbacy in the Baturin monastery, to be able to live more peacefully and to write the Lives of the Saints." Dwelling in a solitary cell, he compiled the second volume, consisting of the next three months—December, January and February; and on May 9th 1693, he brought it himself to the printing establishment of the Lavra of the Caves of Kiev.

Though the industrious monk had withdrawn to live a tranquil and solitary life, those who esteemed his exalted spiritual qualities would give him no peace. Thus, while the holy Dimitri was overseeing the printing of his new work, the new Archbishop of Chernigov, Saint Theodosius (Uglitsky) [†1696; commemorated February 5th and September 9th] persuaded him to undertake the governance of the Monastery of Saints Peter and Paul, which was situated 18 miles from the city of Glukhov. In January of 1695, during his tenure in that monastery, the printing of the second volume of his great work was completed. For this book, Patriarch Adrian counted the saint worthy of praises like unto those he had lavished on him for the first, sending him another grammata expressing his approval. This spurred the holy one to continue to work with greater zeal, and he began to prepare the third volume, consisting of the months of March, April and May.

Early in the year 1697, the holy Dimitri was appointed abbot of the Monastery of St. Cyril in Kiev, and five months later, on June 20th, he was made archimandrite of Chernigov's Yeletsky Monastery of the Holy Dormition. Thus was the goodly desire of Archbishop Lazarus (Baranovich) fulfilled: Saint Dimitri finally received a miter. Yet, though elevated to the rank of archimandrite, the holy one was mindful of the words of the Scriptures, "Unto

whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" [Lk. 12: 48], and committed himself to his labors and struggles with even greater zeal and diligence. He did not forsake his work on the Lives of the Saints, yet neither did he forget the good estate of the monastery, and he helped all with his advice and prudence, in word and deed.

Two years passed, and the holy Dimitri was transferred to the Monastery of the Savior in Novgorod-Seversky. This was to be the last monastery he was to govern. There he completed the third volume of the Lives of the Saints, which saw the light of print in January of 1700. Therefore, Archimandrite Joasaph (Krokovsky) of the Lavra of the Caves, and the brethren of that monastery, as a token of their particular respect for him as the compiler of the Lives of the Saints, sent him as a gift an icon of the all-holy Theotokos which had been bestowed upon Metropolitan Peter (Moghila) of Kiev by Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich, at the time of the latter's coronation.

That same year (1700), Emperor Peter I, concerned for the remote provinces of his vast domain, asked Metropolitan Barlaam of Kiev "to seek among the archimandrites or abbots, or the other monks, a good and learned man of impeccable life, who could serve as metropolitan for Tobol'sk, and who, through God's mercy, might preach in China and Siberia, and might bring those held fast in the blindness of idolatry and other forms of ignorance to know and worship the one true God." Barlaam knew no one who fit this description so well as the archimandrite of Novgorod-Seversky, and early in 1701 Saint Dimitri was summoned to Moscow. There he delivered a speech of greeting to the emperor, in which he evoked the image of the dignity of an earthly king as depicting on earth the image of Christ, the King of heaven. Soon, on March 23rd, he was consecrated Metropolitan of Siberia and Tobol'sk. They adorned the humble Dimitri with great honor, yet it did not affect his heart. The land of Siberia is wild and cold, and the health of the saint was weak, undermined by his never-ending labors. The land of Siberia was remote, and the saint had a task close to his heart, which he had begun in Kiev and could continue only there, or in places nearby, which were the focus of education, not in the dense and far-away forests of Siberia. The sovereign himself visited the ailing man and, learning the reason for his illness, calmed him and permitted him to remain for a time in Moscow, anticipating that one of the nearby dioceses would soon become vacant. And in fact such was the case: Metropolitan Joasaph of Rostov reposed, and on January 4th 1702, the holy Dimitri was appointed his successor.

The saintly hierarch arrived in Rostov on March 1st, during the second week of the Great Fast. Entering the city, he first visited the Monastery of the Savior and Saint James. When he entered the Cathedral of the Conception



of the Theotokos, where the relics of Saint James, Bishop of Rostov, repose, the new archpastor celebrated the customary service of supplication (moleben), and at the same time, aware through a special revelation from on high that he was fated to end his industrious and profitable life in Rostov, he designated the site of his grave in a corner of the right side of the cathedral and said to those present: "This is my place of repose; here shall I abide forever!"

Next, he celebrated the divine liturgy in the Cathedral of the Dormition and preached to his new flock an eloquent and moving homily, in which he set forth the mutual responsibilities of pastor and flock. "Let not your heart be troubled over my coming to you," said the holy hierarch, "for I have entered by the gate, not moving in by some other way; I have not sought, neither am I sought; I know you not, neither know ye me. The judgments of God are a great abyss: they have sent me to you, and I have arrived, not that ye may serve me, but that I may minister unto you, according to the word of the Lord: 'He who would be first among you, let him be the servant of all.'"

Undertaking the governing of the metropolitan diocese of Rostov, the holy hierarch Dimitri found great disorder therein. With the zeal of Elijah he gave himself over to ceaseless care for the good estate of the Church and the salvation of men's souls. Following the words of the Gospel like a true pastor, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, Who is in the heavens" [Mt. 5: 16], the bishop showed himself to be a model of piety in all things. At the same time, he strove to uproot from among the people evil traits of every type, such as jealousy, injustice and other faults. The clergy especially grieved the saint by their ignorance and neglect in preaching the word of God. "Alas for our wretched times!" the holy one said in one of his addresses, "for the sowing is utterly neglected, the word of God hath been utterly abandoned, and I know not whom I ought to blame first, the sowers or the soil, the priests or the hearts of men, or both together! All have been unprofitable; there is not one that doeth good, no not one. The sower soweth not, and the soil doth not accept the sowing; the priests are negligent, and the people are astray; the priests do not teach, and the people persist in their ignorance; the priests do not preach the word of God, and the people do not listen or want to listen."

Among many of the clergy the holy hierarch did not find good moral education. On the contrary, he had perforce to note with bitterness that the fathers of families paid little heed to their family members' fulfilling of the principal Christian responsibilities. "And what is even more astonishing," Saint Dimitri continues, "is that many of the wives and children of priests never receive Holy Communion, which I have found to be an endemic prob-

lem. The sons of priests expect to succeed their fathers; but when we ask how long it has been since they last received the Holy Mysteries, many say truthfully that they do not remember when last they communed. O wretched priests who are inattentive to your families! How can they care for the Holy Church who do not lead the members of their own households to Holy Communion? How can they who do not care for the salvation of souls of their own family members lead parishioners?"

The priests had an imperfect knowledge of their own duties. One encountered among them those who at banquets disclosed, with denunciation and scorn, the sins of their own spiritual children, which had been told them in confession. Others were lax about visiting the sick to hear their confessions and give them Communion, especially the poor.

The holy hierarch was filled all the more with pious zeal, was all the more moved to powerful grief, when he learned that some priests, unmindful of the wrath of God, were not rendering fitting honor to the all-pure and life-creating Mysteries of Christ. In one of his epistles, the saint relates the following: "In January of 1702, I chanced to travel to the city of Yaroslavl'. On the way, I entered a certain village church. Having served the customary service of supplication [moleben], I desired to render fitting honor and worship to the all-pure Mysteries of Christ, and asked the resident priest: 'Where are the life-creating Mysteries of Christ?' The priest, as though he did not understand my words, stood, perplexed, in silence. I asked again: 'Where is the Body of Christ?' The priest failed to understand this question as well.' Then one of the experienced priests who was travelling with me asked him: 'Where is the reserve?'" The priest then pulled from somewhere an exceedingly filthy vessel and showed the bishop the Holy Mysteries preserved therein with such negligence—the Mysteries upon which the angels gaze with awe. "I was exceedingly pained of heart," says the saint, "in part because the Body of Christ was preserved in such irreverence, in part because they were ignorant of the veneration which befitteth the all-pure Mysteries. Heaven is astounded at this, and the ends of the earth are filled with fear!"

The holy hierarch then undertook to uproot such crying deficiencies. Desiring that the priests leave off their negligence and approach their ministry with all diligence and fear of God, Saint Dimitri wrote two encyclical letters for the pastors. These encyclicals were sent out to the priests in many copies, that they might copy them for themselves, read through them often and carry out their duties in accordance with them. In the first encyclical, the saint paternally exhorted the pastors to forsake their immorality. He forbade them to relate the sins of their



spiritual children and to glory vainly in their calling and position as spiritual father. In the name of the Lord, he besought them not to disdain the poor and needy, but to care for the souls of all their flock unceasingly and without favoritism. In his second encyclical, the saint commanded, by his archpastoral authority, that the priests, under pain of the dread judgment of God, not only render fitting worship to the holy and life-creating Mysteries themselves, but teach others to do so as well. He admonished them to keep them in a place and vessel befitting their holiness and not to refer to them as "the reserve." He exhorted the priests to prepare themselves for their sacred ministry as is meet and begged them to teach the people as often as possible and to carry out their own duties with care and zeal.

Intent upon utterly uprooting the deficiencies from among the clergy, the holy Dimitri realized that good teaching and upbringing would be the most effective means of accomplishing this. He therefore opened a school in his episcopal residence. Assembling in this school more than two hundred of the children of the clergy, he divided them into three classes, for each of which he appointed a teacher. This school was the object of the saint's particular attention. He visited the classes often, himself listened to the students recite and tested their understanding. If a teacher were absent, the bishop stepped in to replace him. In the time he had free from his other duties, he would gather the brightest of the pupils and interpret for them the books of the Old Testament. During summer-time, when he resided in the village of Demyany, he explained the New Testament to the students. He showed no less concern for their moral upbringing as well. On Sundays and feastdays, they had to go to the cathedral for the all-night vigil and liturgy. After the reading of the first kathisma of the Psalter, while some homily from the Fathers or the life of some saint was being read, the students had to approach the bishop for his blessing, thus making him aware of their presence. The archpastor ordered the pupils not only to observe the Great Fast strictly, but the others fasts as well. He himself heard their confessions and gave them Holy Communion. To those who completed the course of study he found employment in various churches. To impress upon chanters and custodians the importance of their positions, he blessed them to wear the sticharion, a practice which had not existed in Rostov previously.

No matter how overburdened with his many cares and duties, the holy hierarch did not abandon his work on the Lives of the Saints. Almost three years passed from the arrival of Saint Dimitri in Rostov, before one finds the following notation in the chronicle of the bishops of Rostov, which was kept in the cathedral of that city: "On

the year 1705 from the incarnation of the Word of God, on the 9th day of the month of February, the commemoration of the holy martyr Nicephorus, called the victorious, which was also the apodosia [leaving-taking] of the feast of the Meeting of the Lord, at which the holy Symeon the God-receiver said: 'Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master...', the day being Friday, whereon Christ said on the Cross: 'It is finished...', before the Saturday commemoration of the departed and the Sunday of the Dread Judgment, with the help of God and the all-pure Theotokos, and by the supplications of all the saints, the Month of August hath been completed. Amen."

In September of that year, the final volume, which contained the months of June, July and August, was printed at the Lavra of the Caves of Kiev. Thus was the great labor of compiling the Lives of the Saints concluded, which had taken the holy hierarch more than twenty years of intense effort.

One of Saint Dimitri's most pressing problems within the diocese of Rostov was the spread of Old Ritualism, many of whose leaders had withdrawn into the fastness of the Brynsk forests, from whence they disseminated their polemics, which were aimed at the official Church. The holy one resolved to make several journeys through his diocese to preach to his flock and counter the influence of the Old Ritualists.

During one of his trips to Yaroslavl', the saintly hierarch, having celebrated the Sunday liturgy in the cathedral, was returning to his lodgings when he was approached by two strangers who put a question to him: "Holy master, what sayest thou that we ought to do? They are ordering us to shave off our beards, but we would rather they cut off our heads than our beards!" The saint was astonished at this unexpected question and asked in turn: "What think ye? Will your heads grow back if they cut them off?" "Nay," they answered. "And your beards, will they grow back?" asked the saint. "Our beards will grow back," they replied. "So if they cut off your beards, simply wait for others to grow in their place!" When the bishop and the prominent citizens who accompanied him entered his cell, they engaged him in a lengthy conversation over the shaving of the beard, which was an issue of moment, for the Emperor Peter I had issued a decree ordering all laymen to shave, as part of his campaign to modernize his domain. The holy Dimitri knew that there were a great many people in his flock who doubted that they could attain eternal salvation if they shaved in accordance with the emperor's decree. They thought that in shaving they somehow destroyed the image and likeness of God. Long did the saint seek to allay their doubts, demonstrating that the image and likeness of God does not reside in man's beard, but in man's soul. After this, Saint Dimitri



composed a tract which he titled "On the Image and Likeness of God in Man", which he disseminated throughout his diocese. At the emperor's command, it was widely circulated and enjoyed three printings.

Striving unceasingly to benefit the Church and the nation, the holy Dimitri undertook other tasks as well. Thus, it was his intention to compile a chronicle of events in the history of the world, from the creation to the nativity of Christ. The holy hierarch wished to produce such a book not only for his private use, but also because of certain particular circumstances. He was well aware that all throughout Russia it was a rare thing to find a copy of the Bible in Slavonic. Only the wealthy could afford one, and the poor were thus completely bereft of the spiritual profit which the reading of this divinely inspired book gives. And many even among the clergy did not know the order in which the events recounted in the Bible took place. For this reason the saintly bishop desired to compile a short history of the Bible, which anyone could obtain for a modest sum, and thus become familiar with the contents of the Bible. Saint Dimitri set about the task immediately and began to select events from the Sacred Scriptures and various chronicles. But however intensely the holy one desired to complete his chronicle, he was unable to realize his intention. The major obstacle for him in this was the decline of his health. He managed to record events spanning only 4,600 years.

The holy hierarch Dimitri of Rostov was one of the most renowned preachers of his time and often addressed his flock with eloquent and edifying discourse. He would never permit any of his labors or duties to interfere with his preaching of the word of God. The truths of Christianity which he preached, pouring forth directly from the soul of the homilist, were always vigorous and vital, and attracted those who listened to them by the simplicity of their language, which was like that of a father speaking to his children, or a teacher to his pupils. Were it possible to seek out and assemble all the teachings of this Russian Chrysostom in a single volume, it would be vast indeed.

Saint Dimitri governed his flock wisely and never resorted to harsh measures. Distinguished for his meekness, he treated all—rich and poor alike—with the same love, and without any partiality. All of the faithful children of the Church loved and honored him as their father. The emperor himself, and all the imperial household, respected the Metropolitan of Rostov for his truly virtuous life. The Christian virtues of the saintly bishop shone forth equally in his monastic cell and on his episcopal cathedra. And prayer, fasting, humility, non-acquisitiveness, and love for the poor and orphaned, shone forth with particular brightness in his life.

Despite the multitude of cares attendant upon the ad-

ministration of his diocese, the holy Dimitri attended church services daily. On every Sunday and feastday he celebrated the divine liturgy and delivered a sermon. He always took part in processions, no matter how long of duration or length. If he felt unwell, as was often the case, he would send word to the seminary, requesting that his students recite the Lord's Prayer five times for his sake, in memory of the five wounds which our Savior endured on the Cross for our salvation. When he visited the seminary, he exhorted the students to call for help continually on the omnipotent Lord, the Teacher of wisdom and Bestower of understanding. He taught his servants and all who resided with him to recite the prayer "Virgin Theotokos, rejoice..." quietly, whenever the clock chimed. His dealings with his servants were very humane. Whenever any of them was celebrating his namesday, the holy one would give him a present of an icon or some money. He taught them to fast with diligence, and to avoid overeating and drunkenness. And he himself provided an example of this in his personal life. He ate only enough to sustain his bodily strength. During the first week of the Great Fast he would eat only one meal; and during Passion Week he ate only once, on Great and Holy Thursday.

Ever mindful of the Savior's words: "Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" [Lk. 18: 14], the saint distinguished himself throughout his entire life by his great humility. "I am not such a one," he said of himself, "as thy love supposeth me to be. I am not good-natured, but ill-tempered, full of bad habits; and in understanding I stand far apart from the intelligent. I am a fool and an ignoramus, and my veneer of education is but darkness and dust... I entreat thy fraternal love to pray for me to the Lord, my Light, that He illumine my darkness, and that something honorable may be produced by that which is unworthy."

Even though he had attained the exalted rank of hierarch, the holy Dimitri maintained his humility: to those of high estate he was respectful; to those of the middle-class he was kindly; to those of low estate he was merciful; and to the destitute he was compassionate.

With such exalted moral qualities it follows, in and of itself, that the holy hierarch would necessarily be distinguished by a lack of selfishness. And in fact, there was no room in his heart for miserliness, avarice and greed. Whatever gifts and income he received during his lifetime, he used either for the needs of the Church or to benefit the needy. He cared for the orphans, widows, the poor and destitute like a father cares for his own children. Everything he received he distributed to them, summoning the blind, the mute, the lame and the indigent to his residence, offering them food, providing them with clothing and giving them other alms.

The holy bishop bore witness himself to his lack of miserliness and acquisitiveness in his spiritual testament, which he composed two and a half years before his repose. "I have judged it best," he says, "to make known, by this my spiritual testament, to anyone who desireth to search through the contents of my cell after my repose, that he not labor in vain nor abuse those who have served me for God's sake, that he know that from my youth I have not hoarded treasure and riches. (This I say, not vaingloriously, but for the information of those who go through my possessions after I have died.) From the time I received the holy monastic habit and was tonsured in the Monastery of St. Cyril in Kiev, at the age of eighteen, I promised God that I would embrace voluntary poverty. Ever since, and even as I approach the grave, I have not acquired property and possessions, apart from holy books. I have not amassed gold and silver, nor have I permitted myself to possess costly raiment, or anything that was not strictly necessary. Rather, I have striven, in spirit and in deed, as far as possible, to espouse non-acquisitiveness and poverty, caring not for myself, but relying on the providence of God, Who hath never abandoned me. Any gifts which have come into my hands from my benefactors, and the income which pertained to my position, I have expended on my needs and those of the monasteries where I have been abbot and archimandrite; the same hath been true during my episcopacy. I have not not saved my income, which was not great, but have used it either to cover my own needs, or for the necessities of the needy, where God commanded. Let no one, therefore, after my death, interrogate or abuse anyone concerning my property, for I leave nothing for my burial, nor for my commemoration, that my monastic poverty may be evident to God at mine end. For I believe that it will be more pleasing to Him if not one penny remaineth after me, than if a great sum were left to be distributed."

This testament, in which the holy hierarch repeated his desire to be buried in the Monastery of the Savior & St. James, he revealed to his friend, Metropolitan Stephen (Yavorsky) of Ryazan'. At that time they made a vow between themselves: if Metropolitan Stephen died first, Metropolitan Dimitri would preside at his funeral; but if Metropolitan Dimitri departed first to the Lord, Metropolitan Stephen would bury him.

Saint Dimitri reposed at the age of fifty-eight, on October 28th, 1709, a day after the feast of his patron saint. Several days before his death, he was informed that the Tsaritsa Paraskeva Feodorovna, the consort of Tsar Ivan Alexeevich V (elder brother of Peter I, and co-ruler with him) was due to arrive in Rostov to venerate the miraculous Tolga icon of the Mother of God, which had been brought from Yaroslavl' to Rostov to save the Tsaritsa's

having to make a difficult journey over roads made barely passable because of the inclement autumn weather. The saint, hearing this, summoned his treasurer, Hieromonk Philaret, and prophetically declared that his end was near: "Behold, two queens shall come to Rostov: the Queen of heaven and an earthly queen. Only I shall not be vouchsafed to behold them. Thou, the treasurer, must needs be prepared to receive them."

Three days before the repose of the holy Dimitri, a sickness which had persisted in his chest for a long time manifested itself in a cough. Despite this, the saint tried to show that he was able to function as usual. On his namesday, October 26th, he celebrated the divine liturgy himself in his cathedral but was unable to deliver the sermon, and one of his chanters had to read it from the bishop's written text. After the festal meal, he sat down to visit with his guests and well-wishers, though this clearly exhausted him. The following day, Barlaam, abbot of the Danilov Monastery in Pereaslavl', arrived to visit the holy one. During their conversation, the nun Barsonophia (the former nurse-maid of the Tsarevich Alexis Petrovich), who had received the monastic tonsure at the hands of Saint Dimitri himself, sent word to the holy hierarch that she wished to see him. She always treated the saintly bishop with profound reverence and often requested his spiritual profitable instruction. Thus, on this occasion also, Barsonophia earnestly besought the archpastor of Rostov to come to her that day. Saint Dimitri, in company with Archimandrite Barlaam, set out to visit her; but on their return journey he barely reached his cell, and could not have done so had he not leaned on the clergy who were with him. He immediately sent word for his chanters to come and sing for him spiritual hymns which he had composed himself ("O Jesus, my most beloved...", "In God do I place my hope...", "Thou art my God, O Jesus, Thou art my joy..."). The chanting soothed his soul with the words which had been produced by it, and he listened to the singers as he warmed himself before his stove.

When the chanting ended, the holy one dismissed all but one of the singers, asking Savva Yakovlev to remain, for whom he had particular affection, and who was an assiduous copyist of his writings. The holy Dimitri began to tell him of his life, how he had lived in his youth and as a man of mature years, how he prayed to God and His all-pure Mother and all the saints; and he said: "And do ye pray likewise, my children." Then he blessed the chanter and, escorting him from the cell, bowed down before him almost to the ground and thanked him for his diligence in copying his writings. Seeing the archpastor so humbly accompanying him and bowing down so low, the chanter began to tremble and said reverently: "Dost thou bow down to me, the least of thy servants, holy master?" To this



the holy hierarch replied with his wonted meekness: "I thank thee, my child!" The chanter began to weep bitterly and withdrew.

After this, Saint Dimitri ordered his servants to depart for their own quarters, and he closed himself up in a special room, as though desiring to rest, and, alone, he gave himself over to fervent prayer to God. In the morning, the servants who entered that room found that the saint had reposed on his knees, in an attitude of prayer. Thus, the prayer which had sweetened the life of the holy hierarch accompanied him even to death.

The precious body of the departed saint was arrayed in the hierarchal vestments he himself had prepared, and was moved that very day to his house chapel. While his body lay in its coffin, his unfinished manuscripts were placed under his head and feet, in accordance with his will. Soon, news of the repose of the holy hierarch spread throughout Rostov, and a multitude of the people came to his coffin, sincerely lamenting the incalculable loss of their beloved pastor and teacher. That day, the Tsaritsa Paraskeva Feodorovna arrived in Rostov with her daughters, the Tsarevnas Catherine, Paraskeva, and Anna Ivanovna (the future empress). Failing to find the saint among the living, as he himself had foretold, she wept greatly because she had not been counted worthy to receive his blessing, and ordered that all the clergy gather to perform a memorial service (pannikhida).

On October 30th, at the Tsaritsa's command, the body of the holy hierarch was transferred to the cathedral with fitting honor. The Tsaritsa then had a second pannikhida served and, having bade a final farewell to the saint, departed for Moscow.

Soon, Metropolitan Stephen of Ryazan' arrived to perform the burial service. Going directly to the cathedral, he prostrated himself before his departed friend and wept greatly over his loss. Then he ordered the treasurer Philaret to make ready everything necessary for the interment in the Monastery of the Savior & St. James. The abbots of the monasteries of Rostov, the clergy of the cathedral and many of the laity then approached Metropolitan Stephen with the request that Saint Dimitri be interred in the cathedral, where it had been customary to bury his predecessors. But Stephen would not agree, saying: "When His Grace, Metropolitan Dimitri first visited the Monastery of the Savior & St. James, he chose it as the site of his grave. How then can I violate his wishes?"

On November 25th, the day designated for the burial, Metropolitan Stephen, faithful to the testament of his friend, celebrated the liturgy and burial service, during which he delivered a eulogy, often exclaiming: "Dimitri is holy, a saint!" Afterwards, accompanied by the weeping multitudes, the body of the holy one was transferred to the

Monastery of the Savior & St. James, and there, in the Cathedral of the Conception, it was committed to the earth.

For about forty-three years, the body of Saint Dimitri lay under its slab. In September of 1752, when the old floor of the cathedral was taken up, the workmen found a rotting wooden framework, on top of which, instead of a lid, fat logs had been placed lengthwise, which had subsequently fallen into the framework. They removed the rotting framework and the soil which had filled it, and saw the coffin of the saint. It had not rotted. Its cover had been broken by the falling logs, and through the cracks they could see the miter, the hierarchal vestments, and the covering over the face of the saint, all untouched by decay. When the precious relics were exposed, it was found that the arms of the holy one, which were still crossed on his breast, were completely incorrupt. Four fingers of his right hand alone were damaged, having been broken when the coffin lid was smashed by the fall of the logs which covered the framework in which the coffin had been placed. The left hand had come free from the wrist, but all the other members were intact.

Hearing of the uncovering of the holy relics, the people hastened in crowds to see the newly-manifest favorite of God, and at his grave-site an abundant spring of miracles poured forth, which even to this day are bestowed upon the faithful, to the glory of the triune God Who is wondrous in His saints—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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*Translated from the Russian by the reader Isaac E. Lambertsen, from A Supplement: The Lives of the Saints of Russia, Vol. I (Moscow: Synodal Press, 1908), pp. 182-210. Copyright © 1989. All rights reserved by the translator.*

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**A PSALTER**  
OR  
**MEDITATIONS ON GOD**  
EXCERPTED FROM THE WORKS OF OUR HOLY FATHER EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN  
AND ORGANIZED IN THE MANNER OF THE PSALMS OF DAVID.

With the blessing of the Most Reverend Vitaly,  
Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York and First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

**PREFACE**

This edition, which includes selected prayers that St. Ephraim the Syrian offered up to God, is called a Psalter because the Psalter is a book of praises of God; they both contain prayers offered up to God. St. Ephraim was filled with the grace of God and, moved by it, he poured out his heartfelt prayers to God.

It is the duty of every Christian to harbor in himself the spirit of grace. The best means to do so is prayer. He who harbors grace in himself prays as he should, for the strength of grace moves in him. But he who has not yet reached this state must nurture prayer in himself. Inner prayer is nurtured by means of prayers which have poured forth from souls inflamed with grace, prayers which move the spirit. This is why the Holy Church puts prayer books in the hands of Orthodox Christians, and the present edition of selected prayers can serve this purpose as well.

Just as St. David is the foremost psalmist among the Prophets, so is St. Ephraim the foremost author of prayers among the Holy Fathers. His soul could not contemplate any Divine subject without becoming enraptured in a prayerful outpouring of feelings. For this reason his writings are replete with prayers. This Holy Father can rightly be called a Christian psalmist.

The number of psalms contained in the God-inspired Psalter served as a guide for choosing the works included here and the list of their contents reflects the contents of the Psalms. In addition to prayers the psalms contain dogma, history and moral teachings. Works of this nature have been included in the selection of prayers by St. Ephraim.

From early times works on dogma have been printed with the Psalter: the Confession of Faith by St. Athanasius the Great and St. Maximus the Confessor's work on the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation of God the Word. Explanations of dogma here are taken from St. Ephraim. The history presented in the Psalms is the history of God's people. The history presented in St. Ephraim's prayers is the history of every Christian, which is externally delimited by birth, earthly life, death, resurrection and eternal destiny, and internally consists mainly of struggle with sin, of triumphs and of falls, of bright sojourns in good and murky dwellings

in evil. In the writings of St. Ephraim this is all captured in the most precise nuances and the most varied details. The better part of this edition is devoted to this struggle.

Moral teachings are contained in the majority of the psalms of the Psalter. Correspondingly, works have been taken from St. Ephraim's "Beatitudes" and "Woe," with the addition of a few other works under the heading "Life's lessons." The desire to make the content of our Psalter more diverse inspired the inclusion of works on moral teachings. We selected those works which most resembled prayer in form.

We have borrowed not only the number and content of works from the Psalter, but also their organization according to their use in Church as well. Thus we have 150 works divided into twenty sections as in the Psalter, which has twenty kathismas, and every section has three parts, sections termed "glories," just as every kathisma is divided in three. At the beginning of almost every section there is a work on dogma and every section closes with moral teachings. "Life's lessons."

We have attempted to select prayers each of which has unique content. The attentive reader will readily recognize this in spite of all of the apparent similarities in their form as prayers. But even those who find the prayers monotonous should not find this boring reading, just as people who love to pray do not find it boring to repeat "Lord, have mercy" or "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner" countless times.

In presenting this Psalter it is our sincere wish that everyone who opens it may find in it something that his spirit yearns for, be it instruction or contrition, inspiration or solace.

May the Lord grant this to all of us through the prayers of our Holy Father Ephraim the Syrian.

**KONTAKION, TONE 2**

Ever foreseeing the judgment, Thou didst weep bitterly, O Ephraim, and though Thou wast a lover of silence, by Thy works Thou wast a teacher indeed, O venerable one: thereby, O universal Father, dost Thou rouse the slothful to repentance.



## THE FIRST KATHISMA THE FIRST STASIS

### 1.

#### BEATITUDES

Blessed is he who has in the Lord become completely free of all earthly things in this troublesome life and who has loved the one good and merciful God.

Blessed is he who has become a doer of good works and, like a fruitful field, brings forth a great abundance of the fruits of life in the Lord.

Blessed is he who stands at prayer in service to God and, like the heavenly Angels, at all times has pure thoughts and does not allow the evil one to approach him, that he may not enslave his soul and lead it away from God the Savior.

Blessed is he who loves sanctity (purity) like light, and has not defiled his body before the Lord with the shameful acts of the evil one.

Blessed is he who always retains in himself remembrance of God, for such a person on earth is like a heavenly Angel, constantly celebrating the Lord with fear and love.

Blessed is he who loves repentance, which saves all sinners, and does not delight in sin, that he might not appear ungrateful before God our Saviour.

Blessed is he who like a courageous warrior defending heavenly treasures preserves his soul and body without reproach in the Lord.

Blessed is he who, like the heavenly Angels, has pure thoughts and who with his lips sings praises to the One who has authority over all that breathes.

Blessed is he who has become like unto the Seraphim and the Cherubim and is never slothful in spiritual service, who ceaselessly glorifies the Lord.

### 2.

#### A SONG OF GLORY TO THE SAVIOR

I bow down to Thee, O Master; I bless Thee, O Good One; I beseech Thee, O Holy One; I fall down before Thee, O Lover of mankind; and I glorify Thee, O Christ; for Thou, O Only-begotten Master of all, O Only Sinless One, wast, for the sake of me, an unworthy sinner, given up to death on the cross in order to free the soul of a sinner from the bondage of sin.

And how shall I repay Thee, O Master? Glory to Thee, O Lover of mankind! Glory to Thee, O Merciful One! Glory to Thee, O Longsuffering One! Glory to Thee, who forgivest every fall into sin!

Glory to Thee, who didst descend to save our souls! Glory to Thee, who didst take flesh in the womb of the

Virgin! Glory to Thee, who didst suffer bondage! Glory to Thee, who didst accept scourging! Glory to Thee, who wast made an object of humiliation! Glory to Thee, who wast crucified! Glory to Thee, who wast buried!

Glory to Thee, who didst rise from the dead! Glory to Thee, of whom the prophets spoke! Glory to Thee, in whom we have believed! Glory to Thee, who didst ascend into heaven! Glory to Thee, who didst sit with glory at the right hand of the Father and who art coming again with hosts of Angels to judge every soul that has scorned Thy holy passion!

In that anxious and dreadful hour when the heavenly powers are roused, when all the Angels, Archangels, Seraphim and Cherubim will stand with fear and trembling before Thy glory, when the foundations of the earth will be shaken, and when all that breathes will be terrified by the incomparable greatness of Thy glory, — in that hour mayest Thou take me under Thy wing and may my soul be delivered from the terrible fire and from the gnashing of teeth, from outer darkness and eternal lamentation, that I may bless Thee and say: Glory to Him Who has desired to save a sinner according to the great compassion of His mercy!

### 3.

#### GRANT GRACE TO SATISFY ALL NEEDS.

Make me whole, O Lord, and I will become whole! O only wise and merciful Physician, I beseech Thy benevolence, heal the wounds of my soul and enlighten the eyes of my mind that I may understand my place in Thine eternal design! And inasmuch as my heart and mind have been disfigured, may Thy grace repair them, for it is as true salt.

What shall I say to Thee, O Knower of the heart who searchest the heart and the inner workings of men? Indeed, Thou knowest that, like a waterless land, my soul thirsts after Thee and my heart longs for Thee. And Thy grace has always sated those that love Thee.

Thus, as Thou hast always heard me, so now do not scorn my prayer. For Thou seest that my mind, like a prisoner, seeks Thee, the Only true Savior.

Send Thy grace, that it may satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst. For insatiably do I desire Thee, O my Master! And who can have enough of Thee if he truly loves Thee and thirsts for Thy truth?!

O Giver of light! Fulfill my supplications and grant me Thy gifts according to my prayer; impart to my heart just one drop of Thy grace, that the flame of Thy love may begin to burn in my heart; and, like a fire, may it consume evil thoughts like thorns and thistles!

Give me all this in abundance, grant it to me as God unto man, as the King to His subjects, and increase it as a Kind Father.

## THE SECOND STASIS

### 4.

ALL THAT WE NEED IS IN THEE, O LORD.

We search for Thee in prayer, O Lord, for all is comprehended in Thee. May we be enriched by Thee, for Thou art wealth which diminishes not with the changes of time.

May Thy loving-kindness come to our aid! May Thy grace defend us! From Thy treasury pour out upon us restoration to heal our sores.

We must seek Thee above all else, and not seek anything else but Thee, for he who seeks Thee finds all in Thee.

In Thee is wealth for the needy, heartfelt joy for the sorrowing, restoration for all the wounded, consolation for all who mourn.

Accept our prayer, O our Lord, and grant us Thyself. May we live in Thee, may we possess Thee instead of all else, for then all is ours.

Grant, O Lord, that we may be Thine. And according to Thy loving-kindness be Thou ours: for the righteous Father gave us Thee for the healing of our sores.

Thou art ours according to the will of Thy Father; and Thou art ours according to Thine own desire. Thou art with us, O Emmanuel! Thou art with us, as our Lord.

Accept these prayers from us, O our God, Who hast descended to us. Accept the tears of sinners and show mercy to the guilty.

According to Thy desire Thou hast been united with us; be the intercessor of our prayer. Raise it up to Thy Father and establish peace in our souls.

### 5.

BE ALL FOR US AND GRANT

THAT WE MAY DEDICATE ALL THAT WE HAVE TO THEE.

Like the apple of Thine eye preserve me, O Lord God; defend me and beneath Thy wings shelter me from temptations.

Be the guardian of the eye, that it might not look about in the manner of a thief; be the guardian of the ear, that it might not perceive falsehood.

Be the guardian of the lips, that slander, judgement, criticism and idle words might not come forth from them.

Be the guardian of the heart, that it might not be inclined to evil and might not work iniquity.

Grant us, O Lord, knowledge, both of what we should do and of how to set about it.

Grant us, O our Lord, that we may be sweeter to Thee than fragrances and perfumes.

Grant us, O our Lord, that we may love Thee and hate the world. Grant us, O Lord, to acquire only Thee rather than all transient possessions.

Grant us, O our Lord, to bring Thee three choice gifts. Grant us, O our Lord, to burn three aromatic censers before Thee.

Grant us, O our Lord, to light for Thee three brightly burning lamps: the spirit, the soul and the body, these three gifts for the One Trinity.

Let us dedicate the spirit to the Father, the soul to the Son and the body to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit which will raise it again from dust.

O Father, consecrate our spirit to Thyself! O Son, consecrate our soul to Thyself! O Holy Spirit, consecrate to Thyself our body which is afflicted by sores.

Grant us, O our Lord, to rejoice in Thee, and mayest Thou rejoice in us in the last day. To Thee is praise, from the spirit, soul and body. And unto us be Thy mercies.

### 6.

THE HOPES OF THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT THE WORLD.

The son of Jesse tunes his pipe and sings: blessed are the blameless who follow in the way of the Lord, who walk in His Law. And our Saviour said in the Gospel of life: blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God; blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted; blessed are they who weep, for they shall rejoice.

To those who renounce the world and its vain doings, who scorn its lusts and abhor its comforts, is given a promise of recompense in the Gospel of salvation — an everlasting habitation and eternal life.

Out of love for their Lord they have left their families in this world, their parents, their wealth and their possessions; for they heard that blessed are the poor in spirit. And in return for this the heavenly kingdom awaits them.

They have made their bodies into a temple of the Holy Spirit; by their strict way of life they have overcome lusts, they have borne the yoke of strenuous labor; out of love for their Lord they have despised their own life.

They have crucified their souls and nailed their bodies to the cross, and by their ascetic labors have they moved their Creator to mercy.

They have disdained the desires of the flesh and loved restraint. They have driven away the corruptions of the flesh and loved chastity.

They have chosen for themselves affliction and all manner of privation and have despised rest. They have shed pride and clothed themselves in humility.

They have conquered the enemy and triumphed over him. They have put him to flight and acquired glory for themselves. They have conquered him and they are magnified. They have scorned him and they are crowned.

The Father loves them, and with love the Son embraces them, and the Holy Spirit abides in their pure bodies.



Christ calls to them, saying: come, ye who have labored in My name, enter the habitation, from whence those who are called do not go out.

On such as these does the Lord bestow crowns, and they taste bliss in His habitations in place of the sorrows which they bore with Him from morning til night.

The heavenly kingdom awaits those who have gained victory in warfare and have thus acquired glory.

It is habitual for the Angels to descend and fortify warriors during battle.

The spirits rush to meet the victors. They call them blessed and say:

Come, ye who are troubled and rest from your labors: by your patience in suffering have ye conquered the evil one.

Paradise opens its gates to them; they abide in dwellings of light and there they find repose.

In their mouth is a song of glory and praise to Him Who strengthened them in battle.

### *THE THIRD STASIS*

#### 7.

#### THE SOUL WHICH HAS EXPERIENCED SALVATION IN THE LORD.

Thou, O Christ our Savior, hast become for me the path of life which leads to the Father. There is but one path, and it is my joy, and at the end of it is the heavenly kingdom.

Thou, O Master, Jesus, Son of God, hast become for me the path of life and enlightenment.

In the heart of Thy servant Thy grace has become light and joy which are sweeter than the honey of the honeycomb to the lips of Thy slave.

In the soul of Thy servant Thy grace has become a treasure, which has made his poverty rich and driven away misery and corruption.

For Thy servant Thy grace has become a refuge, strength, a defense, ennoblement, praise, and food for the whole of his life.

How can Thy servant be silent, O Master, after having tasted the great sweetness of Thy love and grace? How could I dare once again to obstruct the waves of grace which pour forth into the heart of me, a sinner, and which are replete with sweetness according to the multitude of Thy gifts?

I shall sing of the glory of the Master of Heavenly Powers and shall magnify Thy grace, O Christ our Saviour, and my tongue shall not cease to chant of Thy love.

Thy love draws me to Thee, O Saviour, O praise of my life.

Thy grace makes it sweet for me to follow Thee with my mind.

May my heart be as a fertile field for Thee, and may Thy grace sprinkle the dew of eternal life upon it.



May Thy grace reap a good harvest on the field of my heart: humility, reverence, sanctity, and all that is ever pleasing to Thee.

Return my soul to the sweet garden of paradise, and may it abide in light, that surrounded by the delights of paradise I, too, may say with all the saints: glory to the Immortal Father, honor to Him Who presents heavenly gifts to this worthless one, that he may bring a tithe of glory to the King of all!

#### 8.

#### THE ONE HOPE FOR FALLEN SINNERS IS THE CRUCIFIED LORD.

Mourn over my nakedness, O my beloved brothers! I have angered Christ with my wanton life. For the Good One created me and gave me freedom, but I have abused it and repaid Him with evil, with my lawless deeds.

The Lord of all made me perfect and established me as an instrument of His glory, that I might serve Him and glorify His name; but I, wretch that I am, have made my members into instruments of sin and have used them to work all manner of deceit. Woe is me, for He will judge me justly.

My shameless deeds presage my fate at the judgement, for they will indict my poor soul. Unrelentingly I beg Thee, O my Saviour: shelter me under Thy wings and do not expose my defilement at Thy great judgement, that I might glorify Thy kindness.

All manner of evil deeds which I have done before the Lord of all exclude me from communion with the Saints. And because I have not served God with my life as they have, I have no share in their good deeds. Alas, I have perished!

Now the grief that I deserve overtakes me. For if I had struggled along with them, then, like they, I would be glorified. But because I was negligent and served the passions, I do not belong to the hosts of victors, but have become an heir of gehenna.

To Thee, O Victor pierced by nails on the cross Who calleth out to sinners saying: come, receive forgiveness freely — to Thee I unrelentingly pray, O my Saviour: turn Thine eyes away from my lawlessness, and by Thy sufferings heal my sores that I may glorify Thy kindness.

O All-Good One, Whose kindness is immeasurably greater than the deceit of the world, strengthen my miserable soul with hope in Thy kindness, for it has been weakened and become exhausted to the extreme by the crushing infirmities of deceit and sin, and it holds on only by relying on Thee, for it hopes to find comfort in Thee!

## *THE SECOND KATHISMA* *THE FIRST STASIS*

9.

LAMENT THAT THE INFLUENCE OF GRACE  
HAS BEEN IGNORED.

Like the publican I sigh, like the harlot I shed tears, like the thief I call out, like the prodigal son I entreat Thee. O Christ my Savior and Lover of mankind, strengthen my soul which has grown faint, which has been paralyzed with the intoxication of delights; heal its scabs and wash it, blackened with sin, with Thine honorable blood!

According to the multitude of Thy loving-kindness, convert me, O Only Longsuffering One, and deliver me from all sensual indulgence. Extinguish the furnace of my passions, so that they will not burn me up in the end.

Woe is me! Thou, O Lord, hast given me the light of knowledge, and I have clouded it. Woe is me! Constantly hast Thou visited Thy grace upon me and yet dost Thou visit it upon me, but hourly have I rejected this gift for my healing and yet do I reject it.

What a great multitude of gifts hast Thou bestowed upon me and yet dost Thou bestow them upon me, a sinner, O Master; but I who am wretched have always been and continue to be consciously ungrateful before Thee!

Thy grace comforts me, enlightens me and strengthens me, but I in my negligence turn my attention to vain things and I always sink once again into the bile and bitterness of my passions.

Thou, O All-Good One, remindest me of death and of eternal torments and drawest me toward life in order to save me, but I ever shun these saving thoughts. I drive them out and occupy myself with that which is of no benefit to me. Thus have I no justification before Thee.

I knock at the door of Thy loving-kindness, O Lord, that it may be opened to me. I do not cease to pray that I may receive what I request, and unwavering I seek pardon.

Be ever patient with me, depraved as I am; deliver me from the sins which possess me, that having become whole, I may arise from the deathbed of corrupting sin.

Free me from my wanton habits before the end overtakes me, for who will confess Thee in hell?

Make white my garment before the terrible command catches me unprepared and ashamed.

Deliver my contrite soul from the mouths of the lions and save it according to Thy grace and mercy, by the prayers of our All-Pure Lady the Theotokos and of all the Saints.

10.

I CANNOT MANAGE MY OWN SELF;  
GRANT ME THE SPIRIT OF REPENTANCE.

Before Thy glory, O Christ my Saviour, I will announce all my misconduct and confess the infinitude of Thy mercies, which Thou pourest out upon me according to Thy kindness.

From my mother's womb I began to grieve Thee, and utterly have I disregarded Thy grace, for I have neglected my soul. Thou, O my Master, according to the multitude of Thy mercies, hast regarded all my wickedness with patience and kindness. Thy grace has lifted up my head, but daily it is brought low by my sins.

Bad habits entangle me like snares, and I rejoice at being thus bound. I sink to the very depths of evil, and this delights me. Daily the enemy gives me new shackles, for he sees how this variety of bonds pleases me.

The fact that I am bound by my own desires should provoke weeping and lamentation, shame and disgrace. And yet more terrible is the fact that I bind myself with the shackles that the enemy places upon me, and I slay myself with the passions that give him pleasure.

Although I know how dreadful these shackles are, I hide them behind a noble appearance from all who might see. I appear to be robed in the beautiful clothes of reverence, but my soul is entangled with shameful thoughts. Before all who might see, I am reverent, but inside I am filled with all manner of indecency.

My conscience accuses me of all this, and I act as if I wish to be freed of my shackles. Every day I worry and sigh over this, yet I ever remain bound by the same snares.

How pitiful I am; and how pitiful is my daily repentance, for it has no firm foundation. Every day I lay a foundation for the building, and again with my own hands I demolish it.

My repentance has not even made a good beginning as yet; yet there is no end to my wicked negligence. I have become a slave to passions and to the evil will of the enemy who destroys me.

Who will give the water to my head, and the founts to my eyes for tears, so that I may ever weep before Thee, O Merciful God, that Thou mightest send Thy grace and draw me, a sinner, out of the sea, furious with the waves of sin, that hourly convulses my soul? For my desires are worse than wounds that cannot be bandaged.

I wait hoping for repentance and deceive myself with this vain promise until my death. Ever do I say, "I will repent," but never do I repent. My words give the appearance of heartfelt repentance, but in deed I am always far from repentance.

What will happen to me in the day of the trial, when God unveils all things at His court! Certainly I shall be sentenced to torment, if here I have not moved Thee to mercy, O my Judge, by my tears.

I hope on Thy mercies, O Lord, I fall at Thy feet and beseech Thee: grant me the spirit of repentance and lead my



soul out of the dungeon of iniquity! May a ray of light shine in my mind before I go to the terrible judgment which awaits me, where there is no opportunity to repent of one's wicked deeds.

## THE SECOND STASIS

### 11.

I CAN CONTROL NEITHER MYSELF NOR THE ENEMY.  
HELP ME, O LORD!

No one can heal my disease except He Who knows the depths of the heart.

How many times have I set boundaries for myself and built walls between myself and sin! But my thoughts transgressed the boundaries and my will tore down the walls, for the boundaries were not secured by fear of God, and the walls were not founded on sincere repentance.

And again I knock at the door, that it may open for me. I do not cease to ask that I may receive what I request; and I know no shame in seeking Thy mercy, O Lord.

O Lord, my Savior! Why hast Thou forsaken me? Have mercy on me, O Only Lover of mankind. Save me, a sinner, Thou Only Sinless One.

Wrench me from the mire of my iniquities, that I may not be forever sullied by them. Deliver me from the jaws of the enemy, who roars as a lion and desires to swallow me up.

Rouse Thy strength and come, that Thou mightest save me. Beam Thy lightning and disperse his power, that he may be struck with fear and flee from Thy face, for he has not the strength to stand before Thee and before the face of those who love Thee. As soon as he perceives a sign of Thy grace he is taken with fear of Thee and withdraws from such with shame.

And now, O Master, save me, for I flee to Thee!

### 12.

MY LAST HOUR IS AT HAND. GRANT, O LORD, THAT I  
MAY REPENT AND THUS PROTECTED ACCOMPLISH THE  
DREADED CROSSING AFTER DEATH.

Will it take you long to repent, O my poor soul? The judgement is at hand, the fire is made ready for your members.

All the days of my life have I wallowed in the sea of evil, and I did not lament my sins. And all at once death will place its shackles upon me.

Satan has seduced me and, having bound me with my own desires, he has taken me into captivity and ruthlessly cast me to the ground. Alas, what shall I do now?

Do Thou, O righteous Judge, disgrace the evil one who wars against me and who secretly sets out his cunning snares for me when I wish to repent.

Be my helper, O Most Merciful Lord, and I will rise up and mock him, I will tear apart all his snares. Woe is me in that day when Thou, O Lord, wilt judge sinners! O, may I not then be ashamed before the hosts of Angels!

Be anxious and tremble, O my soul. Pray to your Lord and say to Him: have mercy on me, O my Saviour, and rescue me, for I have wallowed in vice. I am like the harlot and am ashamed to pray to Thee. Save me by Thy grace, O Lord, from gehenna.

The day of the Lord will suddenly shine forth for all creation, and the righteous will come out to meet the Lord with burning lamps; but I am in darkness; there is no oil in my lamp, that I might meet the Bridegroom when He comes.

My spirit trembles when it hears that the day of judgment is at hand; my thoughts become agitated when I consider the fire that awaits the lawless. According to Thy kindness which is merciful to sinners, have mercy on me who have perished — and I will sing Thy praises when Thy kingdom comes.

May Thy cross accompany me during that dreaded crossing, may it drive the powers of darkness away from me; may it be for me the key that opens the gates of paradise, that I may enter into bliss, rejoice and glorify Thy compassion, O Most Merciful One!

### 13.

ENLIGHTEN AND STRENGTHEN ME  
FOR THE SAKE OF REDEMPTION.

Grant us Thy help, O All-Good One, and never abandon our race! Vouchsafe us thine all-searching wisdom, that we may know the transience of all things. Heal our sores with repentance.

Visit us, that we might not persist in our sins. Thou Who art most merciful to our souls, instill in us remembrance of good, for much have we loved evil. Dispel all harm from us, O Good One.

Accept whatever good will is in us, and send us a corresponding measure of strength. Our soul is not capable of offering Thee a gift which is as great as Thou art. May Thy marvelous death move Thee to compassion, O Lord.

Our error is much mightier than our prayer. Our prayer is insignificant, but our guilt is great. What sacrifice could we bring to reconcile ourselves with Thee? We have nothing to give to Thee. Thus we ask Thee to reconcile us by Thy blood, O All-Merciful One.

Thanks be to the Father Who sent Thee, O our Saviour! For by Thee we who are guilty are vindicated. Thou hast taken away our sins by Thy cross; take away our guilt also in Thy coming.

## *The Third Stasis*

14.

O REDEEMER OF ALL, SAVE ME  
AND GRANT ME TEARS TO WASH AWAY THE WALL  
WHICH SEPARATES ME FROM THEE.

Praise be to the Good One Who descended for our sake, became like unto us and healed our sores by His all-sanctifying flesh and His all-sanctifying blood! May all sing praises to Him!

Thanks be to the Kindhearted One Who ever bears our burden, although He knows our wickedness, Who has created us and nourishes us, and commands His sun to shine upon us! May we praise His goodness!

Open to me the door of loving-kindness, O our Lord, Who art full of mercy; stretch out Thine hand to me, O Good and Merciful One, and return me to the fold of Thy sheep, that I may glorify Thy kindness.

My sins are a wall between me and Thy goodness. Tear it down that I might approach Thy loving-kindness; pour out Thy love upon me and exalt me to Thy heights.

But the wall of my sins can be torn down only by tears and contrition, so grant me all the days of my life diligently to lament my sins and to gather the fruits which will serve me well in the day of judgment.

15.

GOD BECAME MAN

The Father exclaimed: This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; heed Him. Thus He spoke of the Son, Who is undivided from the glory of the Divinity. For the Father and the Son together with the Holy Spirit are one nature, one force, once essence and one kingdom.

And Mary was called the Mother of God by His Son in the flesh, Who was undivided from the glory of His Divinity. For one is God, Who has appeared to the world in the flesh.

His glory proclaimed His Divine nature which is from the Father, and His body proclaimed His human nature which was from Mary; both of His natures converged and were united in a single hypostasis.

He was the Only-Begotten of the Father and also the Only-Begotten of Mary. And he who divides the hypostasis in Him will also be separated from His kingdom, and he who conjoins His natures will be deprived of the life that is of Him.

He who denies that Mary gave birth to God will not see the glory of His Divinity, and he who denies that He was clothed in sinless flesh will receive neither salvation nor the life which was granted through His body.

His very deeds give witness and His Divine strength teach the contemptuous that He is true God. And His sufferings give proof that He is true man.

16.

SEND GRACE TO QUICKEN ME, AS ALL THINGS ARE  
QUICKENED IN SPRING BY THE BREATH OF LIFE.

O Good lover of mankind! If Thy grace pours forth upon the grass, the flowers and all earthly vegetation in its time, then the more so shalt Thou grant to Thy servant that which he requests of Thee.

For the air becomes clear and the birds adorn their voices with varied melodies, singing glory to Thy great wisdom. All the earth is clothed with a raiment of many-colored flowers woven without human hands, and is glad and celebrates the holy day.

Water also my heart with the dew of Thy grace, O Good Lover of mankind! Just as a sown field cannot sprout and nourish its plants without sufficient rainfall, so my heart is incapable of producing things pleasing to Thee and of bearing the fruits of truth without Thy grace.

Lo, the rain nourishes the plants and the trees are crowned with diverse flowers. May the dew of Thy grace also enlighten my mind and may it adorn my heart with the flowers of contrition, humility, love and patience.

May my prayer draw near to Thee, O Lord! Grant me Thy holy seed, that I might bring Thee a harvest of sheaves abundant in good fruits and say, "Glory to Him Who gave me this that I might bring it unto Him," and bow down to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

## *The Third Kathisma The First Stasis*

17.

ABOUT THE GUIDANCE OF GRACE AND ABOUT TEARS.

O Good Lover of man, Who accepted the two farthings and praised the good will of the widow, accept the prayers of Thy servant; multiply my prayer and grant my requests, that I might become a temple for Thy grace. May it abide in me and itself teach me how to please it. May it strum my heartstrings and play songs of contrition filled with gladness. May it fasten my mind as with a bridle, that I might not sin before Thee by going astray, and might not be cast out of the light.

Hearken, O Lord, hearken unto my prayer, and grant that I who am unclean might become pure, that I who am senseless might become wise, that I who am useless might become profitable in the flock of Thy chosen laborers and of all the Saints who have been pleasing to Thee — and that I might be admitted to Thy kingdom.

The glad in paradise intercede for me and cry out to Thee, O Only Lover of mankind. Attend Thou to their prayers. Through them will I give Thee glory in return, for Thou hast hearkened unto their prayers and hast been generous to me and not disregarded my prayers.



Thou, O Lord, hast said by Thy Prophet: open thy lips, and I will fill them. Behold, both the heart and the lips of Thy servant are opened; fill them with Thy grace, that I may bless Thee unceasingly, O Christ my God and Saviour.

My prayer is powerless, but my iniquities are great and mighty. Sins overwhelm me and my weaknesses dismay me; Thou art wealthy and good, kindhearted and merciful.

Thou Who didst open the eyes of the blind man, open the eyes of my mind that I may unceasingly contemplate Thy beauty.

Thou Who didst establish bounds for the sea by Thy command, establish bounds for my heart by Thy grace, that it might not turn aside to the right hand or to the left from Thy beauty.

Thou Who gavest water in the desert to the people who did not humble themselves and contradicted Thee, give me contrition and grant tears to my eyes, that I might weep day and night throughout the length of my life with meekness, with love and with a pure heart.

Hearken, O Lord, unto the prayer of Thy servant, according to the intercessions of all Thy Saints, Thou Who art blessed above all unto the ages.

### *The Second Stasis*

#### 18.

DESPITE MY SINS, HEARKEN UNTO ME, DRIVE AWAY THE  
ENEMY AND STRENGTHEN ME TO THE GOOD.

O God righteous and praised, O God Pre-eternal:  
Hearken unto this man, this sinner, in this hour!

Hear me, O God, hear me in Thy fortress, remember not  
the continual disobedience of my worthlessness.

Answer my prayer with fire, as Thou once did for Thy  
Prophet.

O God of Holy powers! O, Creator of the fleshless ones!  
O, Thou Who didst pronounce: ask, and ye shall receive! Be  
Thou not repulsed by me who am unclean, who  
have defiled my lips and am covered  
with sins.

Hear me, Thou who hast prom-  
ised to hear those who call to Thee in  
truth and direct the steps of Thy ser-  
vant to the path of peace.

I cry to Thee with all my heart:  
God, O God, hearken unto me, O hope  
of all the ends of the earth and of those  
who travel afar. Banish all unclean  
spirits that they may flee from the face of  
Thy servant.

Take up Thy weapons and shield and  
rise up to help me. Draw Thy sword and  
imprison them who persecute me. O Lord,  
tell my soul: I am your salvation.



May the spirit of fear, the spirit of despondency, and the  
spirit of pride and of all manner of malice withdraw from my  
soul. In it may all manner of excitement produced by the  
workings of the devil be extinguished. May my spirit, soul,  
and body be enlightened by the light of Thy knowledge. May  
I come to be a perfect man made unto the measure of the stat-  
ure of the fulness of Christ with the Angels and all who have  
been pleasing to Thee throughout the ages, and I shall glorify  
Thine all-honorable and venerable name of the Father, Son  
and Holy Spirit.

#### 19.

HOW TO RELIEVE THE CONSCIENCE OF INNER ANXIETY.

O Lord and Master! O God of heaven and earth! Show  
Thy favor and open to me the door of repentance, I pray Thee  
with my afflicted soul.

Regard me according to Thy great mercy, incline Thine  
ear to my prayer and forgive me, who am guilty of falling into  
many sins, forgive me all of the wretched things I have done,  
for I have been conquered by my own evil will.

I seek peace and do not find it, for my conscience is  
stained; there is no tranquility in me due to the multitude of  
my iniquities.

Hearken, O Lord to a heart which cries out to Thee with  
affliction. Attend not to my deeds, but to the affliction of my  
soul and hasten to heal me who am cruelly wounded. Grant  
that I may soon come to my senses according to the grace of  
Thy love for mankind.

Take from me the burden of my sins and grant me not that  
which my deeds merit, that I may not perish in the end and  
that I may not be altogether deprived of thought and concern  
for my restoration.

I fall down before Thy compassion; have mercy on me  
who am cast into the dust by the judgment of my deeds.

O Master, summon me, a captive who is held and bound  
by his deeds as with chains, for Thou alone knowest how to  
free those who are bound and how to heal the invisible sores  
that are known only to Thee Who knowest all mysteries.

Show Thy favor and stretch out Thine hand to me. Draw  
me out of the mire of my iniquities, O Thou Who dost not  
rejoice at the destruction of man and Who dost not turn His  
face from those who cry to Thee with tears.

Hearken, O Lord, unto the voice of Thy servant, who  
cries to Thee; show Thy face to me, for I am beclouded;  
enlighten me with the coming of Thy Holy Spirit.

Grant me, O Lord, diligence, for I have become defiled,  
and turn my labor into joy.

Tear up my sackclothes and gird me with gladness; may  
the door of Thy kingdom open to me, that, having entered  
therein, I may glorify Thine all-holy name of Father, Son, and  
Holy Spirit.

GRANT FREE PASSAGE THROUGH THE TOLL-HOUSES AND  
FORGIVENESS AT THE JUDGMENT.

Mightily do I magnify Thee, O Lord, Who hast regarded my humility and not delivered me into the hands of my enemies, and saved my soul from want.

And now, O Master, may Thy hand shield me, and may Thy mercy be upon me, for my soul is troubled and grieves greatly that when it leaves this poor body the cunning hand of the adversary might not find it and keep it back in darkness for the sins which I have committed in this life, both in knowledge and in ignorance.

Be merciful to me, O Master of all, that my soul might not behold the lurid glance of the cunning demons; but may it be received by Thy pure and radiant Angels.

Give glory to Thy Holy name, and by Thy strength raise me up to Thy Divine throne.

When I am judged, may the hand of the prince of this world not seize me and drag me, a sinner, away to the depths of hell. But protect Thou me and be my defender.

Have mercy, O Lord, on my soul, which has been defiled by the passions of this life; and if I have, as a man, due to the weakness of my nature, sinned in anything, whether in word or deed or thought, O Thou, Who hast power to release men from their sins, forgive and release me that I might obtain Thy cooling solace and be found without any impurity or stain, without reproach and unsullied before Thee; and may Thy hand receive me, O Master, for Thou art blessed throughout the ages.

*The Third Stasis*

GO WITH REPENTANCE,  
FOR THE LORD IS READY TO RECEIVE YOU.

Thou, to whom the penitent are pleasing, incline Thyself to me, a sinner. Fill me with the crumbs from Thy great banquet; do not let my life perish at the left side in darkness. May Thy truth not behold the terrible impurity of my misery in that great morning when the sentence unto eternity shall be pronounced.

The joy of this world is bitter. Woe to him who is seduced by it! As a boat is tossed by waves, so is my life convulsed by my misery. Vain joy captures it with the illusion of satisfaction. Be Thou my helmsman and steer my ship to Thy harbor in that great morning when the sentence unto eternity shall be pronounced.

God loves the sinner when he comes to repentance and, with his eyes full of tears, sighing and sobbing, he cries out to Him: O our Lord, deliver me from fire! I pray Thee, accept the tears of my misery. Voluntarily have I sinned before Thee, yet voluntarily do I also repent.

So come forth boldly, O sinner. The door is already open and ready to receive you. Bring the Lord a sacrifice of tears and go freely to Him. He does not demand gifts, nor does He have any respect of persons. He is kindhearted to men and willingly forgives the sins of repentant sinners.

LIFE'S LESSONS: THE BEATITUDES.

Blessed is the man who has the fear of God in him, for the Holy Spirit calls him blessed, saying: blessed is the man who fears the Lord.

Blessed is the man who has the love of God in him, for he bears God in himself. God is love and he who abides in love abides in God.

Blessed is he who has attained endurance, for a long-suffering man is great in understanding.

Blessed is he who is a stranger to anger and irritability, for anger does not beget a man of God's truth.

Blessed is he who has loved meekness, according to the Lord's word: blessed are the meek.

Blessed is he who has attained true obedience, for such a man imitates the Lord our Saviour, Who was obedient even unto death.

Blessed is he who is a stranger to envy and rivalry, for it was by envy that death came into the world.

Blessed is he who does not defile his tongue with slander, for the heart of a slanderer is full of all manner of defilement.

Blessed is he who has attained abstinence, for this one virtue is a buttress for all the rest.

Blessed is he who is charitable to the poor, for he will find many to defend him at the judgement.

Blessed is he who leads an exalted life yet maintains an humble persuasion: he imitates Christ and with Him he shall sit in glory.

Blessed is he who forces himself to perform all manner of good deeds, for the forceful shall capture the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed is he who walks the straight path, for he will enter heaven bearing a crown.

Blessed are all these, for they shall stand boldly before the Judge and receive a holy reward from His hands.

OUR SAVIOUR, BOTH GOD AND MAN.

We confess one and the same individual as perfect God and perfect man. He is God the Word Which was flesh.

For if He was not flesh, why was Mary chosen? And if He is not God, who does Gabriel call Lord?

If He was not flesh, who was laid in a manger? And if He is not God, who did the Angels who came down from heaven glorify? If He was not flesh, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes? And if He is not God, in whose honor did the star appear?



If He was not flesh, who did Simeon hold in his arms? And if He is not God, to whom did Simeon say: Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace?

If He was not flesh, who did Joseph take when he fled into Egypt? And if He is not God, who fulfilled the prophesy: Out of Egypt have I called my Son?

If He was not flesh, who did John baptize? And if He is not God, to whom did the Father say: This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased?

If He was not flesh, who hungered in the desert? And if He is not God, unto whom did the Angels come and minister?

If He was not flesh, who was invited to the marriage in Cana of Galilee? And if He is not God, who turned the water into wine?

If He was not flesh, who took the loaves in the desert? And if He is not God, who fed the five thousand men and their women and children with five loaves and two fish?

If He was not flesh, who slept in the ship? And if He is not God, who rebuked the waves and the sea?

If He was not flesh, with whom did Simon the Pharisee sit at meat? And if He is not God, who forgave the sins of the harlot? If He was not flesh, who wore a man's garment? And if He is not God, who healed the woman with an issue of blood when she touched His garment?

If He was not flesh, who spat on the ground and made clay? And if He is not God, who gave sight to the eyes of the blind man with that clay? If He was not flesh, who wept at Lazarus' grave? And if He is not God, who commanded him to come forth out of the grave four days after his death?

If He was not flesh, who did the Jews arrest in the garden? And if He is not God, who cast them to the ground with the words: I am He? If He was not flesh, who was judged before Pilate? And if He is not God, who frightened Pilate's wife in a dream?

If He was not flesh, whose garments were stripped from Him and parted by the soldiers? And if He is not God, why was the sun darkened upon His crucifixion?

If He was not flesh, who was crucified on the cross? And if He is not God, who shook the foundations of the earth?

If He was not flesh, whose hands and feet were nailed to the cross? And if He is not God, how did it happen that the veil of the temple was rent in twain, the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened? If He was not flesh, who hung on the cross between the two thieves? And if He is not God, how could He say to the thief: Today thou shalt be with me in paradise?

If He was not flesh, who cried out and gave up the ghost? And if He is not God, whose cry caused many bodies of the Saints which slept to arise? If He was not flesh, who did the women see laid in the grave? And if He is not God, about whom did the Angel say to them: He has arisen, He is not here?

If He was not flesh, who did Thomas touch when he put his hands into the prints of the nails? And if He is not God, who entered through the doors that were shut?

If He was not flesh, who ate at the sea of Tiberias? And if He is not God, on whose orders were the nets filled with fishes?

If He was not flesh, who did the Apostles see carried up into heaven? And if He is not God, who ascended to the joyful cries of the Angels, and to whom did the Father proclaim: sit at My right hand?

If He is not God and man then, indeed, our salvation is false and false are the pronouncements of the Prophets.

*to be continued in future issues  
translated by Antonina Janda*

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## THE LIFE OF SAINT JOHN THE FASTER, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Whom the Holy Church Commemorates on the 2nd of September

The holy hierarch John was born in Constantinople, and labored during the reigns of Justin II, Tiberius II and Maurice. Originally, he was a master goldsmith, and in his virtuous life was a man of piety, generous toward the poor and strangers, and full of the fear of God.

Having taken into his home a Palestinian monk named Eusebius, John began to live the common life with him. One day, while they were walking together, the monk found himself on John's right side. Suddenly, he heard a voice unfamiliar to him, which said: "Father, thou oughtest not to walk to the right of one greater than thee!" This was a sign from God that John would be entrusted with the great hierarchal ministry. Having heard this, the monk told the blessed Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople, of it, and the

latter began to urge John to accept the monastic tonsure, for he considered him worthy to be a member of the clergy.

It so happened that, while the holy John was standing in prayer in the Church of St. Laurence, he received the following revelation: he beheld a multitude of saints in the sanctuary, and all were wearing vesture of dazzling white and chanting beautiful hymns. Then there came forth from the sanctuary a man who held a vessel from which he generously distributed alms to the many poor folk who had gathered; yet the vessel never grew empty. When one of the paupers cried out from the crowd: "Lord, have mercy, so long as this vessel is not empty!", the vessel straightway became empty. This revelation compelled the venerable one to consider, and he marvelled at this vision, which was a foreshadowing both of his



future rank and his great generosity to the poor.

When some time had passed, Patriarch Eutychius of Constantinople reposed, and, by God's will, John, being a worthy candidate, was elected and designated for ordination; but he would not consent, until he beheld the following dreadful vision: on one side was visible a sea rising up to the heavens, and a terrible fiery furnace; and on the other side, a multitude of angels, who said to him: "Thou wilt not accept the cathedra? Then let another, but thou wilt be punished by all of us!" After the angels had said this to John in a threatening manner, he, although against his will, submitted and was consecrated Patriarch of Constantinople. In that rank he led a life of virtue and fasting until his very repose, as his miracles attest. He stilled the great tumult of the sea with prayer and the sign of the Cross. He restored the sight of a certain blind man from Gaza named John, placing on his eyes a portion of the Body of Christ, and saying: "May He Who healed the man who was blind from birth heal thee also!"; and straightway the blind man received the gift of sight.

One day, as God permitted it to happen, a great plague fell upon Constantinople. The venerable one entreated God to turn away His righteous wrath. He ordered one of his faithful servants to bring him two vessels — one full of small pebbles, and the other empty — and to stand all day by the place to which they were bringing the dead, and to count them by transferring the pebbles from the full vessel to the empty one. When he had made his calculation, the servant found that on the first day they had brought in three hundred twenty-three corpses, and he informed the holy one accordingly. St. John predicted that the plague would come to an end, and this prophecy began to be fulfilled with each passing day; for on the second day, the servant who stood and counted found that fewer corpses were being brought in, and on the third day, fewer still. By Sunday, in accordance with the saint's prediction and by his supplications, the pestilence had abated completely.

The holy John's abstinence was such that he took no food whatever for six days, and on the seventh he partook of a few fruits of the garden, either melons, or grapes, or figs. Thus did he sustain himself throughout the tenure of his episcopate. He slept very little, and that in a sitting position; moreover, he would attach a little string to a candle, and position a basin of water so that, when the candle burned down and the string fell into the water, a noise would result, and he would thus be awakened.

The holy one prayed continually, and engaged in many struggles with the passions. Many were the times when he would repel an invasion of aliens and deliver the city from destruction by his prayers and fasting; and he protected his flock from enemies, visible and invisible. He was extremely generous with alms, a father to the orphaned, a sustainer of the poor, a protector of the oppressed, a zealot for God, an uprooter of all evil.

On a certain Friday, the holy one was informed that there was to be a horse race the following day; now it so happened that this was to be the Saturday of Pentecost. The saint then said: "There must not be a horse race on Holy Pentecost!", and, kneeling down, he besought God that, for the sake of the fear of Him and to put an end to this scandal, He manifest some sign. And, lo! when all had gathered together at the place where races were usually held, and when the races had commenced, a mighty tempest suddenly broke forth. Thunder pealed and lightning flashed; rain fell and large hailstones, so that everyone fled in terror from the stadium.

The venerable one also possessed the authority to cast out unclean spirits. Thus, a certain woman whose husband was possessed brought him to a hermit; but that ascetic said to her: "Go to the most holy John, the Patriarch of Constantinople. He will heal thy husband." And when she had done so, the woman received that for which she asked, and returned with joy to her home with her husband, who had been cured by the supplications of the saint. And in general, many of the sick received healing through the holy one, and many women were loosed from barrenness by his prayers.

Having thus shepherded his flock wisely, the venerable one attained a blessed repose in extreme old age and passed from earth to the mansions of heaven, on the 2nd of September, 595. When the body of the saint lay dead, Nilus, a well-known provincial governor, arrived to pay his last respects, and, bowing down, he kissed him. Then the saint, though dead, in the sight and to the amazement of all, whispered a few words in the ear of the governor, which the latter never related to anyone. The holy John was interred within the sanctuary of the Church of the Holy Apostles, as one worthy of such honor, who in his life had glorified and blessed God Who is wondrous in His saints: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Translated from the Russian by Isaac E. Lambertsen from *The Lives of the Saints in the Russian Language as Set Forth in the Menology of St. Dimitri of Rostov*, Vol. I (September) (Moscow: Synodal Press, 1902), pp. 63-66. Copyright 1985. All rights reserved by the translator.



## WHERE DID THE BIBLE COME FROM?

Perhaps the days are gone when very many people have the impression that the Bible was somehow mysteriously written in the English of the King James Version (KJV), all ready-made and bound in a book, at some unknown point since the days of the apostles. Certainly, such a notion would be hard to find amongst Orthodox Christians. But in the society in which we live, perhaps many Orthodox folk included, there is often a "that's the way it is" attitude, attached to whatever concept of "the Bible" one happens to have.

A truly Christian understanding of the Scriptures, however, must be founded in Truth... not in a thoughtless acceptance of the "received" notion in one's own circle... be that circle Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or Protestant. But Truth is a harsh master. If relentlessly pursued, it often forces dramatic changes in one's preconceived notions, religious or otherwise... and therefore, in one's whole life. Perhaps this is the reason for which it is so seldom pursued!

When we speak of "the Bible", we speak of a *collection* of books. The earliest of these existed in oral form long before they were written down, but attained a written form many centuries before the birth of Our Lord. The latest of these books were written many years after His Resurrection... the very latest, probably, as late as the end of the first century, some 60 or more years after the Resurrection. The former, of course, comprise the Old Testament, and the latter the New Testament. When St. Paul speaks of "scripture", it is to the Old Testament that he refers... few of the New Testament books had even been written yet, and complete agreement in the Church as to which books comprised the "New" Testament was yet several centuries off.

Yes... the Church existed in all her majesty and glory for nearly 500 years *before* anything identical to what we now call "the Bible" could unquestionably have been printed (had there been any printing presses). In fact, the many individual books, of both Old and New Testaments, existed first in papyrus scrolls, then later in hand-copied huge volumes containing one or a very few books on vellum or similar material. A complete "Bible", had it been possible to assemble one, would have occupied a good-sized set of bookshelves.

But the contents of those shelves would have varied considerably from place to place, as we shall see. In this regard, however, the history of the Old and New Testaments differ considerably. Curiously, nonetheless, the notion common amongst many protestants that "Catholics" have a "different Bible" from that which they acknowledge (and therefore, presumably, Orthodox Christians as well) pertains exclusively to the Old Testament. This question, that of the "different Bible", is likely to be one of the first to arise in any fundamental conversation between Orthodox Christians and protestants.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT

The books of the Old Testament are quite varied in character, and have discrete histories. Generally speaking, they fall into four broad groups: the books of the Law (the Pentateuch); the history books (e.g., the books of Kings; the Prophets; and the books of Wisdom. It might be interesting to note in passing that the first "disagreement" concerning the "table of contents" of the Old Testament long pre-dated the Christian era: the Samaritans were distinguished from the Jews by their refusal to acknowledge as "scripture" any books other than those of Moses, the Pentateuch.

Most of the books of the Old Testament were written originally in Hebrew or Aramaic, or a mixture of the two. There is, however, a whole group of books which are an exception, having been originally written (or at least only known to us) in Greek. These books are usually called the "Apocrypha", or "hidden books" — a complete misnomer, as there is nothing hidden about them; they were an integral part of the Greek text of the Old Testament as it was in use at the time of Our Lord, the Septuagint. Many quotations from the Scriptures — the Old Testament — in the books of the New Testament are identifiably from this Greek text. (A glance at any reliable reference edition of the New Testament will readily confirm this... quotations which are clearly from the Greek text are usually identified as, e.g., "Ps 145:5 LXX.") Nowhere, of course, do any of the New Testament books make any distinction between the various books of the Old Testament. It is of *all* this material that the holy Apostle Paul writes when he says "All Scripture is given by inspiration from God" (II Tim 3:16).

### DO YOU HAVE A COMPLETE BIBLE? ...Or a book of selections from it?

It must be said that any volume which claims to be "the Bible" and yet does not contain these books is, at best, an expurgated or abbreviated Bible... and at worst an outright misrepresentation. It would be tedious and unnecessary to list all the books in question; the quickest way to determine whether a volume at hand is complete is to check the table of contents for the two best-known books... the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus (not to be confused with Ecclesiastes). All these books formed part of the original text of the King James Version of the Bible, and are simply deleted from the text in protestant printings.

Concerning the "table of contents" of the Old Testament, there was little serious discussion in the early Church. The apostles and the fathers alike consistently used the text of the Septuagint (Greek) Old Testament. They frequently cited in their writings passages which exist only in the Greek edition, or in which there is a significant difference in sense between

the Greek and the Hebrew editions (as is frequently the case in the Psalms and even more so in the book of Jeremiah). This was no less true of the "other Jews" of the time of Our Lord.

These "apocryphal" books came to be an issue, not for the Christians, but for the post-Resurrection Jews. They in many cases clearly prophesied concerning Our Lord and so were an embarrassment to those who refused to accept His divinity. Consequently, they were officially barred from the *Jewish* canon (official table of contents) of the Scriptures at the *Jewish* Council of Jamnia at the end of the 1st century A.D., 60 or so years *after* the Resurrection. The Protestant reformers of the 16th century chose to accept the authority of this Jewish council in preference to that of the Apostles and the Fathers.

We may reasonably ask why. It makes no sense that they should object to these books on the same basis as that of the rabbis of Jamnia. The answer to the puzzle is quite simple: the books (some of them) *also* make quite evident, prophetically, the special role of the Theotokos, the Mother of God, the maiden Mary of Galilee, in God's plan of salvation. Numerous passages from them are cited quite effectively by the Fathers in discussing the Church's understanding of the role of the Theotokos.

Consequently, the reformers simply opted to get rid of the books they disliked, using the pretext provided by the rabbis that the books did not exist in the Hebrew text. [Martin Luther did not quite have the courage (or the pretext) to continue the pattern and delete the Epistle of James (which flatly contradicts his teaching that salvation is "by grace alone") from the Scriptures entirely... but he did attempt to rearrange the order of the books of the New Testament, placing this epistle at the very end, hoping that no one would read it. This "revisionism", however, unlike the other, was not generally accepted. The "pick and choose" approach to the Scriptures has proven to be the normal method of Western interpretation.]

We can see the logical consequence of such proceedings today: A thousand and more protestant sects each claim to be "based on the Bible and the Bible alone." Each claims to accept the Bible as the inspired word of God (we leave aside the modernists, who apparently believe whatever they see fit without reference to anything except themselves). Each quarrels with the other as to what the Bible says. Why? Quite simply, because the approach to the Scriptures is what is called the "proof text" method. Those portions of Scripture which happen not to support (or even flatly contradict) one's already-established belief are either explained away or ignored... just as the reformers simply threw away a whole collection of books of the Old Testament which they found troublesome.

#### THE NEW TESTAMENT

To dwell at too great length on this matter of the "apocryphal" books of the Old Testament, however, could be very

misleading, for in some significant respects it is entirely beside the point. Some much more critical issues are at stake. In order for these issues to be meaningfully or intelligently addressed, it is first necessary to understand and accept that the Church and the Holy Scriptures have a *history*... that is, that certain things happened in a certain order at certain times, and that, at least to a meaningful extent, we can determine what these were. We must, to reduce the matter to simplicity, admit that the Church existed on the Monday after Pentecost... but that at that point *none* of the books of the New Testament yet existed, and most of them would not be written for yet another twenty or more years, and a few not until nearly the end of the century. If we (or those with whom we discuss the Faith) deny the existence of this history, refuse to admit *facts* as part of divine Truth... then we really have nothing to discuss at all.

In the first weeks, months, years of her existence, the Church had no written documents whatever, except the books of the Old Testament as indicated earlier. The events of the Gospel were related from one believer to another by word of mouth; those who came to accept the Faith heard them from the believers. This was entirely in keeping with the culture in which the Church lived, which was above all else an *oral* culture. Relatively few people were able to read, let alone write... and so they *heard* the word of God and kept it (cf. Lk 8:21; 11:28). The holy Apostle Paul insists upon the matter: "Therefore brethren, stand fast and hold to the traditions which you have been taught, whether *by word* or *our letter*" (II Thess 2:15). And, again: "The things you have learned, and received, and *heard*, and seen in me, practice these things" (Phil 4:9).

In due course, as the Church began to spread beyond her place of origin in Jerusalem and Galilee, communications between the local churches became necessary... and letters were written. Some of these were of such great importance to understanding the Faith that they began to be read in church services, along with the Scriptures (the Old Testament). But copies existed initially only in the local churches to which they had been addressed, although in time in many others as well. As travellers moved from one place to another they carried hand-written copies of the letters for the edification of other believers. Some of these letters were written by the apostles, but there were others, written by other believers as well. Eventually, some of them came to have the character of what we now call "open letters"... addressed to the Church as a whole, rather than to any particular congregation. These are the "universal" or "catholic" or "general" epistles.

As the Church spread, it also became necessary to commit the central core of the events of Our Lord's life and His teaching to writing, to provide a written Gospel for those who came to the Faith far from the little out-of-the-way province of the Empire in which the Lord had lived and died. So it was that the four written Gospels came into being. But this came to pass only *after* the Gospel had been proclaimed



and passed from one believer to another by word of mouth, by tradition ("handing-on") for many years. It is readily apparent upon comparison that no one of the written Gospels contains the entire story. Just as important, perhaps more so... as one would assume, had he no prejudice to the contrary, all four of them together yet are less than the totality of the Tradition of which they are a part. As the Gospel of St. John concludes: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (Jn 21:25).

To be sure, all that is *essential* of the Lord's life and teaching is to be found in the Gospels — but not all that is desirable or helpful to our salvation. Neither any one nor all four of the Gospels together were written to be absolutely exhaustive and final. Were that the case, of course, we would have no need of the rest of the New Testament, nor the Old Testament either. (There have been heretics who claimed just such outrageous foolishness.)

The Revelation of St. John the Theologian (more properly translated the "Apocalypse") and the Acts of the Apostles are of course "special cases". The former, almost certainly the last book of the New Testament to be written, is agreed by most scholars to have been written by St. John near the end of his life, during the reign of Domitian, probably about A.D. 95 (although parts of it may perhaps have been written at an earlier date). It is the only book of the New Testament concerning which there was significant disagreement in the Church... there were parts of the Church for several centuries in which it was not accepted as part of the Scriptures (of this, more later). The Acts of the Apostles, written by the Evangelist Luke, of course could not have been completed any earlier than A.D. 63, as it refers to St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome which continued into that year.

#### OTHER BOOKS?

The picture we have, then, is that of a growing body of Church literature throughout the first 70 years of the Church's life. Some of these books were originally known in only one or a few local churches; others more rapidly gained a widespread audience. What was considered "scripture" in a particular local church was that which was read at the Church services, along with the books of the law and the prophets, and the Psalms, from the Old Testament. But we have not yet touched upon the fact that in this rich climate — of the oral Tradition of the Church and the new books which spoke of salvation — there were also *other* books... quite a number of them, in fact. Some of them were written even during the time in which the books of the New Testament came to be; others were written within the same time-frame, but shortly later. [These books, however, should not be confused with the wholly inauthentic books written later, in the second and third centuries, by various heretics, who attributed their forgeries to the apostles in an attempt to

authenticate their heretical teachings — such as the "Gospel of Thomas", the "Essene Gospel of Peace" and various others.]

Some of these "other books" may indeed have been written by the apostles themselves (e.g., the Epistle of Barnabas; the Apostolic Constitutions). Others were written by other members of the early Christian Church or by the immediate successors of the apostles in the governance of the Church (e.g., the "Shepherd" of Hermas; the epistles of St. Clement, of St. Ignatius, of St. Polycarp). Some of these books were in various parts of the Church (and some of them quite widely) regarded as "scripture", exactly on a par with the Gospels and the other books of the New Testament as we now have it.

The earliest indication we have that *any* of these books (both those we now regard as the "New Testament" and the others) were regarded as "scripture" is evidence of their use in the worship of the Church and of their citation in the writings of the Church Fathers. The early decades of the Church's life were preoccupied with missionary activity and persecution. If it occurred to anyone to make a written "table of contents" of the new scriptural books during this period, we have no indication of it.

#### THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT THE "TABLE OF CONTENTS"

The earliest known list of books which apparently were regarded as "scripture" in the Church's history comes from about A.D. 130 and is known as the Muratorian Canon. Portions of the work have been lost, but it is apparent that it includes the four Gospels and most of the epistles of St. Paul, as well as various other books. But doubts existed in portions of the Church concerning the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of Jude, the 2nd Epistle of Peter, the 2nd and 3rd Epistles of John, and the Apocalypse (this last right up to the council which finally confirmed the canon). As noted earlier, there were portions of the Church in which other books than those we now recognize as part of the New Testament were accepted as such.

It is not until A.D. 369, with St. Athanasius's "Festal Epistle" for that year, that we can find a "table of contents" for the New Testament which corresponds exactly to that which we now accept. For 336 years the Church had been living, growing, developing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit... and only then would it have been possible (though not even yet with universal acceptance) to print "the Holy Bible" as we now know and accept it!

This, of course, is already four decades *after* the Council of Nicæa, *after* the Creed had been written, *after* the Church (as many Protestants would have it) had been finally and ultimately corrupted by St. Constantine. The formal liturgical worship of the Church is already well-defined and so similar to that of the Orthodox Church today (a fact readily established by reference to indisputable historical

documents) that a believer transported in time from then to an Orthodox Church service now would find himself completely at home.

What can one make of this? We shall have to come back to this momentarily... but first let us conclude the history of the "table of contents".

Only five years earlier than St. Athanasius' Epistle, however, the Council of Laodicea (the canons of which were confirmed by the Sixth Ecumenical Council) promulgated a list of the books of the New Testament which was identical... except that it did not include the Apocalypse (Revelation) amongst "all the books that are to be read" (Canon 60). It was not for quite some time yet that there was truly universal agreement as to the books of the New Testament, and it was yet to be another thousand years before there would be a single book identical in contents to what we now call the Bible.

### THE BIBLE AND THE CHURCH

To what kind of conclusion does this drive us? Obviously, the Bible came to be what it is, came into existence, only in the context of the living, dynamic Church of Christ, which had its origin at Pentecost (although its antetype, of course, was to be found in the Chosen People whose history led to the incarnation of the Son of God). It was the life of the Church throughout the first seventy or so years of her existence which, guided by the Holy Spirit, gave rise to the written texts which in due course were to comprise the New Testament. And it was the *continuing* life of the Church for more than another *three hundred* years which was required to refine and define the exact contents of the Scriptures.

Thus, it is pointless and misleading and even dangerous to discuss the Scriptures apart from the life of the Church. If the Scriptures as we know them could only come into existence through the action of the Holy Spirit upon and in the Church over a period hundreds of years, then obviously the *rest* of the experience of the Church during those same centuries (and subsequent ones as well) is of vital importance to their understanding.

And what is this "Church"? It is the same Church which was founded by Our Lord, governed by the Apostles in the earliest decades, later guided and shepherded by their

successors, the bishops. It is the same Church which suffered intermittent persecution for three hundred years, which finally attained freedom under the reign of St. Constantine, which by the guidance of the Holy Spirit defined the *meaning* of the Scriptures as it confronted the perpetrators of the various heresies. It is the same Church which in the holy Councils wrote the Nicene Creed, summarizing the very essence of the Faith and the Scriptures, which in these same Councils wrote the Canons which are the guidelines even to this day for its life.

This is the same Church which teaches us to venerate the saints and their relics. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Church learned how to celebrate the holy Liturgy, the Lord's Supper, with dignity and splendor long before the time at which we can identify a final agreement concerning the contents of the Bible.

And so... we are forced, if we confront the facts with honesty and integrity, to one inescapable conclusion: it is *only* through the Church that we have access to the Bible at all. And it is likewise to the Church that we must turn for its understanding.

### WHICH CAME FIRST...

#### THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG?

This classic riddle is very much to the point here. In point of time, it should be apparent that the Church *long* precedes the Bible as an integral collection of books, and considerably precedes even the individual books of the New Testament. Thus, it is quite certain that the Church founded by Our Lord was *not* "based on the Bible". The Church created by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost had no Bible as we know it... and didn't have to have it to be truly the Church. It can be said with some justification that if every single copy of the Bible in existence were destroyed, the effect upon the Church would be minimal (although the context in which such an event could occur might not be!).

But the converse is not true. If there were no Church [but we are assured this will never come to pass... "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt 16:18)], the Bible would *not* be sufficient to provide what is needed for our salvation. If we doubt the truth of this, we need only cast our glance over the spectacle of what happens when people attempt to create their own "churches" based upon their own, private interpretations of the Holy Scriptures.

### AND WHERE IS THIS CHURCH?

We must, then, look to the Church if we are to have any correct understanding of Scripture. St. Peter insists: "No prophesy of the Scripture is of private interpretation" (II Pet 1:29). But we must not expect to find this understanding by acquiring some compendium of the "true meaning" of the Bible. It is of wisdom, divine wisdom, that we speak... and this is not to be reduced to a series of sentences and paragraphs and books of merely human writing, inspired or





otherwise. No... it is to the *life* of the Church that we must turn if we are to understand the Bible.

This life cannot be ours except by participation. We must be saturated in it through the prayers of the Church, through reading in the wisdom of the nearly two thousand years' writings of the Fathers of the Church, through the daily life of the Christian community. Apart from this life, there can be no real understanding, but only misunderstanding and perversion. The annals of the Church's history are filled with such... as are the shelves of any large library. Wherever man tries to rely upon his own "reason", rather than upon God's Wisdom as imparted in the holy Church, heresy is the certain outcome... separation from the Truth.

But where, an honest inquirer can legitimately ask, are we to find "the Church"? This question could have been easily answered in the first few years of the Church's life. But it wasn't long before there were those who wished to substitute their own misunderstandings for divine understanding... even in the epistles of the holy Apostle Paul we can read of such. Long before the canon of Holy Scripture was firm, it was necessary for the Church to reject the false teachings of the Gnostics (who taught that salvation was to be attained by knowledge), of Arius (who refused to acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God), and of many others. And now we have a thousand and more sects claiming to be either a part of the Church or the only true Church.

Nevertheless, there truly is and never has been but *one* Church. That Church has always been at one with the teachings of the holy Apostles, and always in genuine historical and spiritual continuity with them. That Church first had to define itself as "catholic"... as *universal*, in distinction from the "particular" or partial understandings of some of the early heretics. Later, it had to define itself as "orthodox", as of the *same Faith* as the Apostles and the Church throughout the ages... in distinction from those who were "heterodox", accepting "another faith". From the very beginning, there has been much tolerance for sinners (even though not for their sins), but *none* for false teachings, for heresy: "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be *accursed*" (Gal 1:8).

Throughout, it is one and the same Church. At first, it existed only in the immediate area of Israel; soon, throughout the Roman Empire. It continued to grow and spread for nearly a thousand years, with the falling-away of various heretical groups here and there (most of which have faded from existence) before the cataclysmic schism which plunged almost the entirety of Europe into the darkness of heresy... the schism which created the Roman Catholic Church. [In the West, the continuing decay of the Roman Church produced yet heresy upon heresy... the manifold protestant sects and their offspring.] But throughout the rest of the Christian world... all of the Middle East and parts of Asia... the one true Church continued to grow and flourish: the holy Orthodox Christian Church.

Today, the true Church, the Orthodox Church, is once again present in the West. But it is our responsibility as Orthodox Christians to see to it that the Truth is not only present, but *available* to those who thirst for it. If we permit it to be so obscured beneath the baggage of ethnicism that it remains inaccessible to those who seek the Truth, we shall be responsible for depriving God's "little ones" of the true Gospel.

But these words are directed both to those who are already Orthodox and to those who honestly seek divine Truth. And for *all of us* it is equally true that if we prefer our own private notions to the all-embracing reality of God's Truth, we have made our choice... and shall have to live with the devastating consequences of that choice. If we are to attain the end which God intends for us, we must submit ourselves and our lives and our minds to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, of the Church. Only in the life of the Church is it possible for the Bible to be for us the living, life-giving Word of God. Torn away from the true Church, as a child ripped untimely from his mother's womb, the Scriptures bring not Life, but death—whether the death of rationalism, or that of private "inspiration". Only in the Church can we become one with Our Lord Jesus the Christ... He in us, and we in Him, that we all may be One in Him (cf. Jn 17:22-23).

*This article is also available as a missionary pamphlet @ \$1/ copy + P&H; please see Bookservice listings for details.*

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## CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES

### INFORMATION CHANGES - CLERGY

Fr. Thomas Marretta (p. 100; p. 20) has been transferred to serve St. Nicholas Church at Endicott/Binghamton, NY; new address: 420 W. Wendell; Endicott, NY 13760 (telephone # not available at press time).

### INFORMATION CHANGES - PARISH AND INSTITUTIONS

Nativity of Our Lady, Erie, PA (p. 20); now vacant.  
St. Nicholas Church, Endicott/Binghamton, NY (p. 15):  
Fr. Thomas Marretta, rector.

Orthodox Benevolent Fund: new address: PO Box 4523; Woodland Park, CO 80866.

### MEMORY ETERNAL!

Fr. Boris Kitenko, at Synod, 11/24 June.

## THE SUFFERING OF THE HOLY MARTYRS MARCIAN & MARTYRIUS

Whose Memory the Holy Church Celebrates on the 25th of October

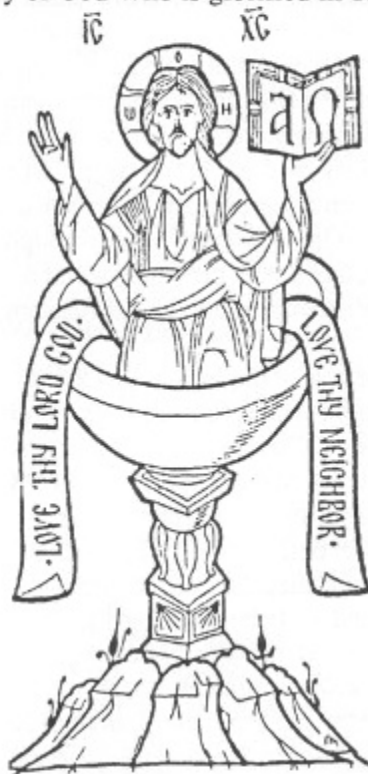
When the ungodly heresy of Arius was spreading, bringing discord into the Church of Christ, both the Arians and the idolators raised cruel persecutions against faithful Orthodox Christians. Then all who acknowledged Christ to be the Creator, not a created being, God become man, not a mere man, were persecuted, tortured, driven into exile and slain. The power of the Arians increased, especially from the time when the Emperor Constantius himself, the son of St. Constantine the Great, fell into that heresy and took into his court two Arian dignitaries, Eusebius and Philip, who zealously persecuted the Orthodox and caused harm to the Church of Christ. Thus, they were the cause of the expulsion and death of our holy father Paul the Confessor, Patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>1</sup> Having banished him to Armenia, they instructed those who were of one mind with them to strangle him, which they did. In his place the heretic Macedonius was raised to the patriarchal throne. They also brought about the destruction of many other confessors and teachers of piety by various means. Among these lovers of the Christian Faith were these two, Marcian and Martyrius, who adorned the Church of God with their teaching and writings.

Earlier, they had been members of the household of the aforementioned St. Paul the Confessor: Marcian was his reader and Martyrius was his subdeacon. They were both his notaries, recording the teachings of the Patriarch and committing to writing the acts whereby piety was confirmed. Furthermore, they themselves were great preachers of the word of God and champions of the Church, from which they deflected the arrows of the heretics like two shields. And because they were the Lord's faithful disciples, He bestowed upon them an eloquence and wisdom which their Arian adversaries were unable to counter or oppose.

After the exile and death of the holy Paul, the foremost heretics directed their poison at his disciples, Marcian and Martyrius. Concealing their malice in craftiness, like a spark amid ashes, they first tried with artful skill to convert them from Orthodoxy to their own impiety. They offered the favored ones of God much gold, promising to win for them the Emperor's favor, to have them elevated to episcopal sees and to make them owners of vast estates, if only they would agree to embrace the heresy they espoused. But the favorites of God disdained all of these things: they refused the gold and spurned the honors promised them; indeed, they mocked the craftiness of the impious, preferring, for piety's sake, to accept abuse, dishonor, tortures and even death, rather than, living in heresy, to enjoy wealth, glory and honor. Then the heretics, seeing that they were in no wise able to incline the holy confessors to their heresy, condemned them to death, which the holy ones desired more than life itself, for Christ's sake.

When they were seized and brought to the place of execution, they requested a little time to pray. Raising their eyes to heaven and lifting up their hands, they prayed: "O Lord God, Who hast invisibly fashioned our hearts, Who arrange all our affairs: receive Thou the souls of Thy servants in peace, for we are being slain for Thee and are reckoned like lambs for the slaughter. We rejoice that by such a death we will depart this life for the sake of Thy holy name. Count us worthy to share in the everlasting life which is with Thee, the Wellspring of life."

Having thus prayed, they bowed their holy heads beneath the sword, and were executed by the impious Arians for confessing the divinity of Jesus Christ. Certain of the faithful took up their precious relics and buried them near the Melandian Gate in the city of Constantinople. Afterwards, our holy father John Chrysostom erected a church in their honor, in which divers healings were bestowed upon the ailing, through the supplications of the holy martyrs, to the glory of God Who is glorified in Trinity forever. Amen.



Translated from the Russian by Isaac E. Lambertsen from *The Lives of the Saints in the Russian Language as Set Forth in the Menology of St. Dimitri of Rostov*, Vol. II (October) (Moscow: Synodal Press, 1904), pp. 425-427. Copyright 1985. All rights reserved by the translator.

<sup>1</sup> Hieromartyr Paul the Confessor is commemorated on November 6th. For his Life, see *Living Orthodoxy*, Vol. V, #5 (Sept/Oct 1983), pp. 11-17.



## THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA: WHO ARE WE?

Who are we? What exactly is this Orthodox Church to which we belong? To answer these important questions we must go back to the very beginning.

Man was created by God to live in full communion with his Creator and share in His Divine Glory. But Adam's rejection of life with God because of personal pride plunged all mankind into sin and separation from God. Because of his sinfulness, man cannot save himself or discover Truth through the efforts of his own reason or experience. God alone can save man, and God alone reveals Truth to sinful mankind. The Old Testament is the history of God's preparing mankind to receive the Truth, the Resurrection and the Life — God in the flesh, Christ Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ, by His earthly life, sufferings, and Resurrection, opened the way for men once again to come into full communion with God.

After ascending into heaven, the Son of God sent the Holy Spirit upon His apostles. We read in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles: "Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like the rushing of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues like flames of fire, divided among them and resting on each one. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit!" So does the history of the Church begin, with the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at Jerusalem during the feast of Pentecost. On that same day, through the preaching of Apostle Peter, 3,000 men and women were baptized, and the first Christian community at Jerusalem was formed.

Before long, the members of the Jerusalem Church were scattered by the persecution which followed the stoning of St. Stephen, the first martyr. "Go forth therefore," Christ had said, "and make all nations My disciples" (Matt 28:19). Obedient to this command, they preached wherever they went — at first to Jews, but before long to the Gentiles also.

Thus, the apostles established the Church throughout the ancient world. St. Peter and St. James founded the Church of Jerusalem. St. Paul founded the Church of Antioch; St. Andrew the Church of Constantinople; St. Mark, the Church of Alexandria; and Ss. Peter and Paul, the Church of Rome. Some accounts of the apostolic missionary journeys are recorded by St. Luke in the book of Acts; others are preserved in the Holy Tradition of the Church. Thus was founded on earth Christ's Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; and thus it began its spread to all the ends of the earth.

The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. It is One Body, Unique and Indivisible, with the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head. It is made holy in all its members by the grace of the Holy Spirit. The Church is catholic (in the original sense of whole and universal) both because it includes true Chris-

tians of all times and places, and also because it makes all its members one in Christ. The Church is apostolic because it was founded on, and organized by, the apostles chosen by Christ for that purpose, and preserves intact the sacred Tradition they established in the Holy Spirit. The Church is a mystical Body which lives both in heaven and on earth, including those who have finished their earthly course and come into eternal blessedness, and those who are still struggling to work out their salvation here on earth. In prayer, in faith, and in spirit, those in heaven and on earth are united with one another and in the Lord and Head of the Church, Jesus Christ.

The visible part of the Church is likewise fully united in prayer, faith and spirit. No doctrinal differences divide Her members. Guided by the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Church since Pentecost, the Church on earth lives by the original and unchangeable Faith of the apostles. In administration, of course, the Church is divided into various branches, like the living branches of the True Vine of Christ. The apostles founded churches throughout the world, but the churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome, being located in major cities, acquired special administrative importance. Their bishops came to be called patriarchs or popes. Later, other patriarchates were established in Russia, Serbia, Rumania and Bulgaria, when these lands became Christian. These patriarchs stand as first among equals with the bishops of the national churches, whose primates bear the titles of archbishop or metropolitan. Local councils of bishops and the Seven Ecumenical Councils, acting with the grace of the Holy Spirit, have settled major disputes concerning Church doctrine and practice, beginning with the First Council of Jerusalem, recorded in the Book of Acts.

The Roman or Western or Latin church separated from the Eastern Church in the year 1054, after changing the Creed and claiming supremacy of the Bishop of Rome (i.e., the Pope) over the other bishops. The Western church was then shattered into a multitude of sects by the Protestant Reformation. However in Greece, Russia, the Balkans, Middle East and elsewhere, the Eastern Church continued to flourish, preserving the Faith of Christ pure and unchanged. Today, this Church is known as the Eastern or Orthodox Church.

We belong to the Russian Orthodox Church — specifically, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. Let us briefly backtrack historically to find out exactly what this means.

Christianity was first brought to the Russian land by the holy Apostle Andrew, but it was not until the year 988, under

Grand Prince Vladimir, that the Russian people and land were baptized into Christ by missionaries from Constantinople and Bulgaria. Thus, Holy Russia was born and grew into a great Christian empire, ruled by the Orthodox Tsar, rich in great saints and wonder-working icons, adorned with great cathedrals and monasteries, and filled with pious and God-fearing people. Missionaries from Russia brought Orthodox Christianity to North America, first to Alaska and then to California. Later, immigrants from Greece, Russia, and other Orthodox lands spread the Orthodox Faith throughout the continent.

The 1917 revolution dethroned the Russian Tsar, and the Communist takeover in 1918 destroyed the Russian Empire and plunged the world, and especially the Orthodox world, into darkness. The Church of Russia was subjected to incredible persecution and abuse by the atheist Bolsheviks. Patriarch Tikhon, Primate of the Church, anathematized the Bolshevik rulers, and suffered imprisonment, torture and finally death for his refusal to submit to their demands. His successor, Metropolitan Sergius, however, submitted and made his notorious Declaration in 1927, which made the Church in the Soviet Union a political tool of the atheist government. The majority of the bishops vehemently protested against this concordat, but they were systematically liquidated. The faithful Christians in the Soviet Union went underground into the "catacombs" (the magnitude of this movement is only now becoming clear as recent events in the U.S.S.R. have allowed a number of those in the catacombs to come into the open) to keep the Faith secretly under the persecutions, just as the first Christians had.

Millions of Russians fled their homeland and settled in exile after the Bolsheviks established their control over Russia. On November 7, 1920, Patriarch Tikhon issued Encyclical #362, ordering all Russian Orthodox bishops outside the Soviet Union to organize a supreme Church authority and establish Church life and order independent of the Church in the Soviet Union, which was and remains under Communist domination. Thus, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad was organized under the senior bishop outside Russia, Metropolitan Anthony.

This free part of the Russian Orthodox Church has carried on Church life under its governing Synod of Bishops, headed first by Metropolitan Anthony, then by the late Metropolitan Anastassy, then by Metropolitan Philaret, who passed away in 1985, and presently by Metropolitan Vitaly. After World War II, the Synod moved from its original headquarters in Karlovtsy, Yugoslavia, to Munich, Germany, and then to New York City, where it is now located.

The Church Abroad has parishes on every continent throughout the non-communist world. In Her faithfulness to

the Holy Orthodox Faith, She strives to remain faithful to Christ and to bear witness to His Truth without compromise.

Throughout the years of the existence of the Russian Church Abroad, and especially in recent years, many natives of the lands in which the Church finds itself have converted to Orthodox Christianity, joining the Church and becoming zealous, energetic members, furthering the spread of the Light of Christ "to all the Nations."

The current relationship of the Russian Church Abroad to the Church in the Soviet Union was summed up by the Sobor of Bishops in their jubilee epistle of 1988:

"Beginning in 1917, raging, merciless, unprecedented persecutions began against the faithful of the Church of Russia. Tens of millions of the slain, tortured, those who perished in exile and forced-labor camps — bishops, priests, monastics, and faithful lay folk — were subjected to unheard-of repressions by the militant atheists. Yet the Church survived by the blood of the martyrs.

Today, the Church of Russia is, first of all, the vast sea of the believers of our land, who are harassed and persecuted for the sake of Christ and His truth — pastors who have withdrawn into the catacombs of their hearts, fathers and mothers who save their children from atheism and unbelief by their prayers, children-confessors — all mighty in their weakness, of whom today's world is not worthy.

We also, who love them, together with them, though we are beyond the boundaries of the homeland, are the Church of Russia, over which the glory of the Lord has shone throughout the thousand years of its existence.

We believe that the hour is not far off when today's persecutors, like Julian the Apostate, will say to Christ: 'Thou hast conquered us, O Galilean!' Then will the Church of Russia arise, cleansed by persecutions, washed in the blood of the martyrs...

...Only then will the Church Abroad and the Council of Russian Bishops beyond the boundaries of the homeland bring to an end its independent existence. But while confessors of the Faith of Christ languish and die in prisons and camps, while the ecclesiastical administration of the Patriarchate of Moscow is stricken by "non-glasnost" and cannot speak the truth, we, the Russian bishops outside of Russia, feel an awesome responsibility lying upon us for the WHOLE Church."

— Compiled by Fr. Gregory and Matushka Naumenko from various sources; reprinted by permission.

*This article is also available as a missionary leaflet @ 25¢/copy (100 for \$15; 500 for \$25; 1,000 for \$40) + P&H; please see Bookservice listings in alternating issues for details.*



## SAINT JOHN POMMER, ARCHBISHOP OF RIGA AND LATVIA

CONTINUED FROM VOL. X No. 4

In 1931, when Archbishop John had completed ten years of service to the Orthodox Church of Latvia, the local population decided to observe the anniversary with a celebration. It was held against the archbishop's own wishes, on 29 September 1931. It is thus described in the commemorative brochures issued for the occasion: "The chief reasons for which Vladyka did not wish to celebrate his anniversary were the modesty which is common to all great men, and the monastic state, which is incompatible with any sort of festivities. This explains why the celebration produced by the organizing committee was outwardly modest in character."

This anniversary celebration was a summary of the archpastor's activity in Latvia. He was not destined to observe another such occasion, on account of his martyr's death. The celebration began with a festive Liturgy in the cathedral in Riga, one which "by the number of faithful present, by their prayerful reverence and the triumphant setting, reminded one of the Paschal service in the cathedral. The solid wall of people in attendance, the overflowing galleries, the radiant festive vestments, the harmonious, extraordinarily beautiful singing of the cathedral choir — all worked to intensify the festive 'namesday' mood."

After the Liturgy, a service of prayer (moleben) followed, which "began in an atmosphere wholly triumphant. The double line of clergy, which stretched from the archbishop's elevated place [in the middle of the church] to the ambo — all the priests of Riga and the deans from all over Latvia — was a rare spectacle in Riga." After the prayer service, Vladyka responded with a speech, of which it is said: "The heart of every believer overflows with bitterness when he hears of outrageous instances of displays of hatred and malice toward the head of the Latvian Orthodox Church. In heartfelt, warm words there appeared the life story, marked by the Cross, of one who throughout his life stood with unparalleled force and spiritual courage in defense of the Orthodox Church."

On the evening of the same day, there was a secular gathering to honor Archbishop John. The hall was filled to overflowing; the speeches of the well-wishers went on without end. In his concluding remarks, Vladyka denied all the merits ascribed to him: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory" [Ps 113:9 LXX], he ended his inspired speech.

It would be impossible to enumerate even in brief all the people and organizations who paid their respects to Vladyka that day. One might mention the address of the Orthodox Germans of Riga (there were 700 of them); the letter from the Church of the Resurrection in Brussels, a greeting from the

Anglican Bishop Sounton Fulhan, the address of the union of Russian organizations of America (50,000 members), and many others. Over six hundred telegrams alone were received. Along with congratulatory messages from the local church organizations, parishes and choirs, there were many greetings from abroad. Among these must be mentioned a telegram from Metropolitan Anthony, who called Vladyka "a courageous defender of Orthodoxy"; a message from the Union of Russian Soldiers in Paris, signed by yet another future victim of the Bolsheviks, General E. Miller; and finally, one from the Don Cossack Choir of Serge Zharov. The Cossacks wrote: "In our travels we have heard much of Vladyka John of Riga. Many of us already knew you during your archpastoral service in the Don region, in Taganrog, as head of the Priazov diocese, when your powerful voice and your episcopal words rang out from the ambo of the Orthodox Church, spreading evangelical truth and Christian morality throughout the cities and villages. Legends grew up around you; in our eyes you were an heroic warrior of the Holy Orthodox Church." Zharov's Cossacks warmly recalled their visit to Riga in February of 1928 in these words: "Those five days of February 1928 will always remain in our hearts as unforgettable pages of our lives. For one thing, Riga gave us the warmest of welcomes, but even more than that: in your person we found a man full of love, an archpastor who showed us his high concern during our entire stay there, and even up to now.

"Which of us can forget the festive Liturgy which you celebrated in the Orthodox cathedral? Who can forget your fervent prayer for us — 'for travelers by sea and on land,' and for our brethren killed on the field of battle? Who among us can forget your inspired sermon, in which you expounded love for neighbor, Christian principles and evangelical precepts, just as you did many years ago in our homeland on the Don? Who can forget our visit to your humble monastic cell in the cathedral basement, where we saw with our own eyes that there exists on this earth a corner where the lamp of the Holy Orthodox Church burns with a bright flame? ... Your encouraging words made us feel sure that Russia's misfortunes are only temporary, and gave us faith in the great future of our much suffering Russia." The Cossacks further said that they considered the day of celebration of the tenth anniversary of Vladyka's service in Riga to be their holiday as well; they concluded their sincere and guileless letter with these words: "Far away from you Cossack chests swell with song and Cossack voices pour forth so loudly that you might hear in Riga the Don Cossack choir singing to you: 'Eis polla eti, Despota!'"

The present author remembers the memorial service for

the Russian royal family which Vladyka served with the inspired singing of the Zharov choir. There were tears in the eyes of many in the cathedral that day; all this was long before the glorification (canonization) of our Royal Martyrs. I remember the large, larger-than-life figure of Vladyka John, his kind and shining eyes, completely filled with a warm, amber sunlight, and also the sweeping motion of his wide-brimmed hat almost brushing the ground before a little girl on Alexander Boulevard in Riga, near the cathedral. I remember his powerful and mighty exclamation, "Axios!" at ordinations, the voice of one who possessed power, and the joyous splash of the first greeting: "Christ is risen!" to the crowd of thousands from the cathedral porch on the night of Pascha. I remember his measured and meditative reading of the Gospel of Christ's Nativity (the titular feast of the main cathedral church): "and they shall call His name Im-man-u-el, which being interpreted is, God with us" [Matt 1:23]. As he was reading, one really felt that God *is* with us. I remember the forceful crossing of the dikirion and trikirion in his hands, as if they were flaming swords; I remember my childlike conclusion, "I guess that's what the holy fighting monks Peresvet and Oslabia [the two monks, former warriors, whom St. Sergius sent to accompany Grand Prince Dimitry Donskoi in the Battle of Kulikovo (1380) against the Tartars] were like, our Vladyka."

Neo-Silvestr describes Vladyka at a church service thus: "Vladyka served very majestically and triumphantly. He carried himself in a stately manner, wearing his episcopal vestments; his voice was powerful, but it became softer when he came to a humble petition in the prayers; he pronounced the prayers touchingly and with great feeling; all of this made an indelible impression on the faithful; they were absorbed in a disposition of deep prayerfulness."

I remember, too, that sorrowful day when my brother (Vladyka's subdeacon) received a telephone call and learned the terrible news that Vladyka had been killed. I remember how our whole class went from school to Vladyka's summer residence. It was not that we wanted to shirk our studies; no, everyone understood that now was not the time for lessons. We students took the initiative in this; our teachers were mostly of the liberal persuasion, but they did not interfere. We walked from the last streetcar stop those same few kilometers which the late archbishop had so often walked, along the Jewish cemetery towards the lake. We stood for the memorial service in the humble, wooden church at the half-burned house; we looked at the small bundle wrapped in cloth — all that was left of our mighty Vladyka.

Here is what the newspaper *Golos Naroda* (*The Voice of the People*) had to say, in an article headlined "Inconsolable Grief of the Orthodox Church — Infamous Murder of Vladyka John": "On Thursday night the most reverend John, Archbishop of Riga and all Latvia (in the world Janis Pommer) fell victim to a deed of nightmarish villainy.

"After 1 A.M. criminals got into Archbishop John's

house on Kish Lake, killed him, burned a series of papers in the stoves, and then, to cover up their crime, set fire to the house.

"At about 2 A.M. the tenant of "*Karlmuizha*," E. Schwarz, noticed the fire and summoned the fire brigade from the nearest telephone.

"When the 3rd Division of the City Fire Department arrived at the archbishop's house, the left side of the house was already in flames. The electric lights were on in the house, but since no one came out into the yard at the noise of the firemen, and there was no answer from inside to their calls and knocking on the window, the firemen at first concluded that Archbishop John was not at home. To get into the house they had to break down the door. When the firemen entered the house, they were immediately struck by the complete disarray which they found throughout the house.

"Closets, dressers and chests were open, things were thrown in a disorderly heap or scattered about the floor; furniture was moved out of place and overturned; it became clear that criminals had been in the house.

"At about 3 A.M. the fire began to die down.

"When Fire Chiefs Kesner and Berzins went up to the second floor, they ran into a locked door, which they had to break down. They did the same with a second door, which led to Archbishop John's work room, and which was suspiciously locked from the outside and barred. When they went into the work room, where the archbishop used to do carpentry in his spare time, and lit the light, a horrifying picture greeted their eyes. In the burned-out room, among the charred remnants of boards and beams, on the carpenter's bench lay a badly-burned body. There was no doubt that this was Archbishop John.

"When the authorities arrived to investigate, Fire Chief Kesner, who supervised the extinguishing of the fire, declared that the fire beyond doubt had been started by arson, and that the perpetrators had set fire to the wood in the work room and the refuse in the attic.

"After the first inspection of the scene of the crime, the investigators came to the conclusion that the crime was committed in the hall. A panel from one of the hall doors was found at the carpenter's bench under Archbishop John's body. From this one may draw the conclusion that after overpowering Archbishop John, the murderers used the panel to carry his body up to the second floor. Without any doubt there was more than one murderer.

"A. Karchevsky, prosecutor of the Riga district court, who led the investigation, supposes that Archbishop John fell victim to his enemies."

G. Neo-Silvestr presents a somewhat different picture of the crime, but one which differs only in details. He starts the story farther back:

"In August of that year [1934] a short notice appeared in the local papers about an unsuccessful attempt by thieves to enter the archbishop's house at Kish Lake 'for the purpose of burglary.'



"Alarmed by this incident, the cathedral parishioners proposed to stand guard by turns over the archbishop, but he categorically refused such a bodyguard, pointing to God as the best defense.

"Not even three weeks had gone by after this 'attempted burglary' when the villains made another try to enter Vladyka's home. This time a husky young fellow crawled through a window of the lower floor at night, but when he jumped to the floor, he fell into the tight embrace of the man of the house himself, and after this was not able to walk to the door himself.

"I pounded him a little; I guess he felt like he was in the arms of a bear," said Vladyka to me, laughing, during my visit the day after it occurred.

"What did you do with the character — send him to the police?"

"What for? He was punished enough. He promised to straighten out and not to visit me again."

"Why don't you get yourself a gun? They could kill you!"

"A monk with a gun? What are you talking about? Everything is done in God's will," said Vladyka, crossing himself.

"And what could thieves be looking for here?" I asked, trying to get a direct answer to a question that interested me.

"They are looking for something other than money or valuables in the home of a poor monk. You see, they know perfectly well that the Church's money is kept somewhere safer than this house in the woods on the deserted shore of Kish Lake. These so-called 'thieves' are intelligent people; they want to get from me by burglary what they can't obtain legally and openly."

This was the journalist's last conversation with the archbishop. He concludes his reminiscences of him thus:

"With a friendly smile the archbishop gave me a firm handshake. As I straightened out my hand outside, I thought, 'Well, this latter-day Peresvet certainly has the hand of an athlete!'"

About the crime itself, Neo-Silvestr has this to say:

"Presumably there were no less than four killers. The setting of the bloody drama, the inspection of the corpse and the data received after the autopsy gave a fairly accurate picture of the archbishop's death.

"Downstairs, on the porch, as soon as Vladyka opened the door, the bandits who had been hiding on the porch rushed into the anteroom and fell on him.

"To judge by the blood-stains spattered on the walls and floor of the anteroom, there was a fierce fight put up by both sides.

"Evidently, the victim was bound in one of the rooms on the first floor and taken to his office, where there was a search for some papers. The floorboards in some places were ripped up. Papers, notes, bills and newspaper clippings were thrown all over the floor in disarray.

"On some of the uppermost papers drops of blood were visible; apparently, they tortured the archbishop here also.

"Then the unfortunate victim was taken by the inside stairs to the second floor, where apparently torture also took place in the wide, empty corridor between the workshop (Vladyka did carpentry) and the other rooms.

"There, on the work-bench brought from the carpentry shop, the firemen found the scorched body of the martyr when they arrived at two o'clock in the morning. He was tied with wire to a door that had been taken from its hinges. The door to the staircase had been tied shut from the outside with wire by the murderers, just in case.

"That Vladyka endured terrible tortures is shown by the following evidence from the inspection of the corpse: the charred feet fell off with the first stream of water which hit the workbench; at the same time the skin on the back was not burnt, and on the back of the victim's head hair remained, while the beard had burned up.

"This proves that Vladyka's executioners tortured him, probably with the flame of an incandescent lamp. A bullet hole was discovered in the right groin of the deceased; the bullet went through to the spinal column, where it became lodged. This is reported by the inspection of the corpse and by the autopsy.

"It is supposed that the shot was fired at the archbishop after his tortures, when the victim lay tied to the bench.

"In addition, smoke and charcoal were found in the lungs of Vladyka's tortured body; this means, the doctor concluded, that the archbishop was still breathing when the fire started.

"Whether the murderers found what they sought in the home of the tortured and killed Vladyka is unknown; the archbishop probably carried his secret to the grave."

The remains of the tortured Vladyka were carried out of the house on Kish Lake on 14 October 1934 with the entire clergy of Riga participating. With icons and banners the mournful procession went through the whole city to the cathedral, where the remains were placed in the church.

I have a dim recollection of the funeral. The whole city was in mourning; there were over 100,000 people on the streets — about a quarter of the city's population. In the cathedral, ranks of priests stretched from the bishop's place in the middle of the church into the sanctuary. Shortly before the beginning of the funeral service, various delegations arrived at the cathedral: Ober-pastor Berg, representing the archbishop of the Evangelical Church, in full vestments; Dr. Machulans, representing the Latvian Evangelical parishes; Ober-pastor Cherny and Walman of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia; Professor Dr. Zhuromsky of the Catholic Church; Mr. Garrison, priest of the Anglican Church; and Superintendent Timberg of the Methodist Church. Mr. Garrison, the Anglican priest, went into the sanctuary, vested, and stood on the solea near the royal gates throughout the service.

The funeral began at 1:30 P.M. By this time representatives of the civil authorities arrived: War Minister J. Balodis; Justice Minister Apsit; Prosecutor Karchevsky, State Controller Kaminsky; the Prefect of the City of Riga, T. Greenwald; and the representative of the President, Mr. Sanders. Representatives of the local diplomatic corps and the military also came.

Before the start of the funeral the rector of the theological seminary, Archpriest John Janson, gave a short speech. In it he cited the historic words of Feofan Prokopovich at the burial of Peter I: "...what do we see? What are we doing? It is Peter the Great we are burying!"

The funeral was performed by Metropolitan Alexander of Tallin and Estonia, Bishop Nikolaj of Pechory, and Archimandrite Feofan, representing Metropolitan Dionisi of Warsaw and all Poland, together with a multitude of the Russian and Latvian Orthodox priests of Latvia. Not all the Orthodox clergy who had come together from every corner of the country were able to take part in the requiem Liturgy, because there was simply not enough room in the sanctuary for such a great number of priests. In their deep grief they stood near the sanctuary in prayer.

Around the cathedral crowded tens of thousands of the faithful, reverently listening as the prayers and hymns were broadcast over loudspeakers. The funeral ended after 5 P.M.; then came the carrying of the hierarch's remains to the Pokrovski cemetery. Everyone followed the coffin — Catholics, Lutherans, Jews, and we, the Orthodox, so suddenly left orphans. The crowd stood in dense rows from the cathedral to the cemetery, a distance of several kilometers. This was, in a way, a demonstration, a challenge to the unpunished murderers. There resulted a long traffic jam before the gates of the Pokrovski cemetery. Not everyone who wished to enter the cemetery was able.

Later, a chapel was erected over Archbishop John's grave, next to the Church of the Protection of the Mother of God (Pokrov). The chapel was built according to the plans of artist and architect Sergei Nikolaevich Antonov, who successfully blended its style with that of the Church of the Protection. An icon of St. John the Baptist was put in a niche over the chapel doors; the drawing for the icon was done by artist Evgeni Evgenyevich Klimov, and then executed in a mosaic studio in Venice.

Where Vladyka had once lived in the cathedral basement, a corner was set aside in his memory; here stood the work-bench on which he was burned. A vessel with a few drops of blood, which it had been possible to gather up, was immured in the basement wall with an inscription on a marble tablet. Here, every Thursday (the day of Vladyka's murder), memorial services were offered.

Why was Archbishop John killed at this particular time? For one thing, on 15 May 1934, K. Ulmanis took power in Latvia. He was a man of the right wing; to this day, the communist press calls him a fascist. Thus, the villains of the

Soviet Embassy may well have feared that, as time went on, it would be harder for them to cover up their misdeeds.

The most widespread version of the murder, one which the late Vladyka's brother, Anton Andrejevich Pommer, personally confirmed for me, was as follows: on Thursday afternoon (i.e., the day of the murder), Vladyka received a telephone call from the well-known singer Leonid Sobinov, who was visiting Riga. He was an old acquaintance of Vladyka's, one whom the Bolsheviks allowed to go abroad once in a while. He said he would come to see Vladyka that evening. This explains why Archbishop John opened the door, expecting Sobinov, he let in his murderers instead. Sobinov died the same night under mysterious circumstances. The notice of his death in the newspaper read: "Riga, 12 October 1934. Leonid Sobinov, well-known Russian operatic performer, died suddenly this afternoon in the Hotel Petrograd. Yesterday, the singer arrived from Germany, where he had been receiving treatment in Bad Nauheim." Apparently, Sobinov was in the habit of meeting with Vladyka on his trips through Latvia, and "always late in the evening or early in the morning..." According to Vladyka, Leonid Sobinov remained a deeply religious Christian, one who carried out his Christian duties and prayed a great deal." *[This version is categorically contested by a certain lady, a former resident of Riga, who asked that her name not be used, and who knew the Sobinov family well. She writes: "L.V. Sobinov had nothing to do with Vladyka's death; all these rumors were falsely disseminated by someone who evidently wanted to cover up his own tracks..." She attests that Sobinov did not even know Vladyka, and, upon seeing him during the procession with the cross on Pascha, he is said to have exclaimed, "But I thought he was someone small and shabby; this is Shaliapin in the role of Boris Godunov."]*

Even more suspicious is the fact that no one was admitted to the Hotel Petrograd, where Sobinov's body lay. Not only reporters, but the judicial authorities and a doctor to perform an autopsy were excluded. Everything was being managed by a character from the Soviet Embassy, who told the authorities that an autopsy had already been performed by a doctor from the embassy.

Of the further conduct of the investigation into Vladyka's murder Neo-Silvestr writes, "An old and experienced journalist, editor of a newspaper close to government circles, called for extreme caution, since in this particular case 'our great eastern neighbor' had an interest, and could cause our government a lot of trouble."

The next morning every editor in Latvia received a request from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to print only official information issued by the prosecutor concerning the murder of Archbishop John Pommer.

[In our time, this type of behavior has received the name 'Finlandization'. It is now widespread not only in the press of countries bordering the Soviet Union, but also in many very influential newspapers of the West, which avoid



printing information unfavorable to the 'great eastern neighbor'.]

The official information was more or less of this type: "The investigation in the case of the murder of Archbishop John is being energetically continued under the direction of the prosecutor. At present, however, it has been impossible to find any trace of the criminals."

Soon after the strange death of Sobinov (a day or two later), his body was moved to the building of the Plenipotentiary Representation (i.e., the embassy), and from there to the train station for shipment to Moscow. Rumors circulated in the city to the effect that in the sealed coffin of Sobinov the Bolsheviks sent to Moscow important papers found in Vladyka's house, or even one of the killers, whom Vladyka wounded. The official reason for Sobinov's death, "heart failure", quite possibly occurred in reality, when the unfortunate singer found out that he had been an involuntary participant in the bloody murder. However, another possibility cannot be excluded — that Sobinov also died a violent death; that they did not trust him and took care of the chance that he might talk about the true facts of the case. This would be the best explanation of the fact that a "red-headed comrade" from the Plenipotentiary Representation did not permit the police physician to perform an autopsy. It soon became known that the day before the archbishop's murder Sobinov had a whole series of telephone conversations with the embassy. This was determined by the prosecutor from the telephone records of the hotel.

The investigation into Vladyka's murder was never completed: "A while after the dispatch of Sobinov's body to Moscow, an official announcement appeared in the newspapers about the dismissal of police chief Tiefental and the appointment of another in his place.

Finally, about a month later, there appeared a new government notice of a temporary halt in the investigation in the case of the murder of Archbishop John, on account of not finding a perpetrator." Then Neo-Silvestr raises the question: "Who were these killers, and why, with all the changes of government in Latvia, did none of the rulers satisfy public demand to renew the unexpectedly broken off investigation in this terrible case, or, at the very least, make public the evidence it had uncovered?"

As it happens, the unfortunate nation of Latvia afterwards endured occupation by Soviet troops, then by Hitler's army, and finally in 1944 it was again occupied by the Red Army. It would seem that enough time had gone by, that it should have been possible to re-open the investigation of the case under one regime or another (more likely under the Germans), or to make public the results of the preliminary inquiry. To this day, this has not been done. True, in the 1960's there appeared a Soviet version (about which more will be said below), but it does not advance any factual data and makes no reference to the materials of the inquiry, as might have been expected.

The story has been put forward that the case was closed (and not re-opened) for two reasons: the lack of a suspect in the crime, and the desire on the part of the authorities not to perturb believers, "since the court examination would have made public the details of intrigues unbecoming for the clergy, etc." In this connection Neo-Silvestr rightly remarks, "One can hardly agree with the latter argument, because in such a case, on the contrary, the Bolsheviks would not have passed up an opportunity to use the investigatory materials for loud anti-religious propaganda, even on a world-wide scale."

The Bolsheviks did not make use of the case on a world-wide scale. Nevertheless, they did undertake something in that direction.

In 1967, there appeared in Riga a booklet by a certain Z. Balevic, in which the author attempts to present Vladyka's murder in a new light, and to cast blame in a totally different direction. Balevic begins with a brief review (after an introduction) of the history of the Latvian Church, and immediately the misinformation begins, followed by outright lies. For example, he maintains that the clergy in Latvia were opposed to the Soviet system because of "loss of their privileged position," which they allegedly held in the Baltic region before the Revolution (p. 6). Unfortunately, the Orthodox Church never occupied a position of privilege in the Baltic region, as a result of the influence of the Lutheran Baltic Germans. Then the author declares, "The monarchists found their most faithful ally in the Orthodox Church: the ecclesiastical counter-revolutionaries, though weak in numbers, were distinguished by an especially furious hatred of everything Soviet" (p. 6). This hatred, according to the author, reached such a pitch that even the threat of German annexation (at the end of the First World War, Germany occupied the entire Baltic region) frightened the Orthodox less than the prospect of Soviet rule. It should be said here that, strange or not, many Soviet citizens expressed the same feelings during the Second World War: they retreated with the Germans to an uncertain future, rather than wait for the reprisals which followed "liberation". Subsequent events proved them right.

Concerning the creation of an independent Latvia, Balevic writes: "By the grace of the imperialist powers, an 'independent' bourgeois Latvia was founded, one in which the Lutheran Church was given a dominant position" (p. 6). This, too, is not completely true. As a matter of fact, the first state to recognize Latvia's independence was the Vatican. Further, the author says that "the Orthodox Church feared free competition in the battle for the souls of believers, even on equal terms" (p. 7). The Orthodox Church did not carry on a "battle for the souls of believers," nor did it fear competition, if indeed such a term can be used in speaking of our Holy Church. According to Balevic, the result of such a situation was that "the servants of the Church poured all their malice on the Bolsheviks, who destroyed 'Holy Orthodox

Rus", where the clergy lived so well" (p. 7). Of course, it was not malice which animated the clergy, but grief for their native land, for the altars which were demolished, for the holy things which were held up to mockery, and for the martyred and murdered servants of God's Holy Church. Our Church has deliberately inserted into the prayer for the salvation of Russia a petition that its oppressors might not perish, "but that they all may be saved and come to the knowledge of truth." Does that sound like hatred?

Balevic advances a very curious explanation for the loyalty of the masses to the Church: "The churchmen were ready to do anything in the name of this 'Holy Rus', into whose temples there streamed crowds of believers, driven by need, grief, and powerlessness" (p. 6). Was it really need, grief and powerlessness which caused people to take refuge in the Church? No; it was faith, most of all... not need and grief.

Further, Balevic asserts that hatred for Soviet Russia brought churchmen and counter-revolutionaries together with the bourgeois rulers of Latvia. Here, Balevic is resorting to a favorite Soviet tactic... juggling the facts. In particular, he contends that the government of Latvia exerted pressure on the Latvian Orthodox Church in the matter of its departure from canonical subjection to the Patriarch of Moscow. He supports his contention by referring to the fact that the government of Latvia obstructed the entry into the country of bishops appointed by the Moscow Patriarchate to the see of Riga. He goes on to say, "The government took into its own hands the calling of a local council in 1920, and constrained it to proclaim the self-determination and independence of the Latvian Orthodox Church. It took great effort on the part of the clergy to preserve canonical order and relations with the mother church, the Moscow Patriarchate" (p. 8). Here every word is a lie. There was certainly no pressure from the government (in Lithuania, for example, the Church remained subject to the Patriarch of Moscow); ties with the mother church were kept only because of Patriarch Tikhon's personal trust in Archbishop John. (Balevic, by the way, seems intensely concerned about the Patriarch's authority).

Archbishop John's election to the see of Riga is mentioned in a footnote (on p. 8) and is described thus: "At the local council of 1920, Archbishop John (Pommer) was elected head of the Latvian Orthodox Church; the Patriarch of Moscow had been previously secretly asked to consent to his candidacy. Archbishop John assured the government that the Orthodox Church in Latvia was independent, but in fact it maintained its canonical subordination to the Moscow Patriarchate, though it kept this a secret." In fact, Patriarch Tikhon gave Archbishop John "the widest canonical independence" in the administration of the Latvian Orthodox Church. Archbishop John himself would never have severed canonical ties with the mother church had the events of the post-revolutionary period not happened, clearly pointing to

the future subservient position of the Russian Church. Only from such a standpoint can that personal autocephaly which Archbishop John obtained from Patriarch Tikhon be understood. It is probable that both men supposed that this was a temporary solution to the existing problems, and hoped that, when history should take a different turn, the Latvian Church would return with joy to the bosom of the Mother Church of Russia.

Balevic sheds crocodile tears over the oppression of the Orthodox Church by the bourgeois Latvian government (p. 8); he also accuses some Latvian Orthodox priests of direct participation in the fight against the "young Soviet state" in the ranks of the White Army.

Then begin the accusations of loyalty to the monarchy. Father John Jansons (who was of Latvian origin) is identified as "a former court priest in Tsarskoe Seloe"; he is blamed for the fact that the young priests of the Riga Theological Seminary were educated in "a spirit of monarchism" (p. 9). In this connection, that wild hatred directed towards Vladyka John emerges, which was finally to lead to a martyr's death at the hands of Soviet hired killers. It is said of Vladyka, "Archbishop John (Pommer), head of the Latvian Orthodox Church, was widely known, even long before the Revolution, as an ardent monarchist and a dyed-in-the-wool Black Hundreds man" (p. 9). He is faulted for his "singular favor" for "White Monarchist organizations". In particular, it is said that Vladyka "carried on extensive correspondence with Church circles of the Russian emigration in Western Europe," and that "the Orthodox clergy frequently held memorial services for the deceased Tsar and prayer services for the health of the numerous pretenders to the Tsar's crown and the title 'Autocrat of All Russia'" (pp. 9-10).

Vladyka is accused also of giving encouragement to the "Russian Christian Students' Movement," run by White emigrés. Nevertheless, the author afterwards vaguely mentions a "conflict" with the Movement. Several reasons are put forward: either Vladyka's "ambition" to run the movement himself, or the desire of its leaders in Paris to move closer to the Russian border, or the possibility that the Movement's leadership considered "the Latvian Pommer...unfit for the role of head of the Church" (pp. 10-11). Here it must be said that the Russian Student Christian Movement had no voice in the election of the head of the Latvian Church. Balevic does not stop there, but hints at a darker side to the Movement's activities: churchmen and White emigrés "undertook to lobby for the creation of a second diocese in Latvia, one which would be led by a 'real Russian'".

Balevic's tale then begins to smack of cheap detective fiction. Archbishop John allegedly discovered that "opposition clergy" stood behind the Movement, and decided to get his opposition mixed up in a court case about misappropriation of Church funds (p. 11). The author names two priests, Fr. Kiril Zaits and Fr. Aleksandr Makedonsky. "At the



beginning of October 1934, he gave the investigation evidence in the case of K. Zaits. On October 12, 1934, he was supposed to hand over to the prosecutor documents exposing K. Zaits, and the same day he intended to begin court proceedings against A. Makedonsky. Vladyka's intentions became known to members of the "Union" [i.e., the Russian Christian Students' Movement]. On the night of 11 October, Archbishop John was savagely killed in his house" (pp. 12-13). Having implicated the Movement and the two priests, the author leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions and make his own choice. Possibly there was friction with both of the priests mentioned. But does it follow that they killed Vladyka? Not by any means. Balevic excessively inflates the extent of certain persons' opposition to Vladyka, wishing thus to whitewash the true masterminds of the crime.

Of course, Balevic says not a word about the fact that "on 12 October 1934 a case was scheduled to be heard in court, in which certain individuals of the left wing were accused of activities against the state. Vladyka John possessed many materials and documents, and was due to appear that day in the capacity of a witness. It is likely that this was the main reason for the terrible crime." Instead, Balevic advances this fantastic idea: "Churchmen of the White emigration counted on placing their own well-known activist Prince Shakhovskoy [the later John, Archbishop of San Francisco] at the head of the Riga diocese, while they would ascribe the death of Archbishop John 'to the Bolsheviks'" (p. 13). Why the White monarchists would kill Archbishop John, a monarchist, and put in his place John Shakhovskoy, who was not at all a monarchist — this remains the author's own secret.

If one would believe Balevic's version of the story, then the question arises: What were the incriminating documents the murderers burned at the archbishop's house, and what sort of exposure did they fear from Vladyka? What is even more puzzling is why the Soviet authorities did not pursue the investigation to its conclusion after their occupation of Latvia in 1940 (or their second seizure of the country in 1944) and prove the complicity of Fr. Kiril Zaits, Fr. Aleksandr Makedonsky and the Russian Student Christian Movement in the murder. Why didn't the Soviet authorities publish the materials of the investigation, which, beyond a doubt, were seized after the final occupation of "bourgeois" Latvia? This was the time when the trusting believers of Latvia should have been shown who killed their beloved Vladyka. But nothing was done. Only in 1967, with the assistance of Balevic, was a timid attempt made to whitewash the true culprits in the villainous act.

I would like to relate two mysterious visions concerning Vladyka. The first is narrated by M.I. Dobrotvorsky: "As a representative of the Russian Students' Organization of the Latvian University, I also took part in the funeral of Archbishop John, since the late archbishop was an honorary member of our Organization. Having placed a wreath at the head of the coffin and having prayed for the deceased, my

colleagues and I took our places on the left side of the cathedral near an arch. The funeral services were in progress, yet delegations kept arriving... A radio loudspeaker outside the cathedral from time to time broadcast information about the progress of the investigation into the archbishop's death, and newly-arrived delegations shared the latest news with us. Involuntarily I listened to their whispering, hoping to find out the mystery of the murder.

"While I was listening to the latest news, a shiver or something like an electrical current suddenly passed through my body. Turning my head to the right, on the right side of the coffin containing the archbishop's remains, I saw the archbishop himself, standing at his place in full vestments, facing the sanctuary, in an attitude of prayer. In his right hand the censer was gently swinging, and as his hand moved a sound, like that of the little bells on the sakkos, could be heard. I noted that the color of his mitre and his vestments was the same as that of the vestments in the coffin. Around the Bishop's place stood churchgoers in civilian attire, though their faces were not familiar to me.

"How long this vision continued I cannot specify, although I think it could have been no more than a few seconds, during which I felt that I was in contact with the archbishop; I knew that he knew that I saw him, and I knew that this was no projection of my own thoughts, no hallucination. It was something outside myself, not I, that made me concentrate, tore me away from the external world, and lifted the curtain on another world for me... A feeling of peace, true spiritual joy and satisfaction with the archbishop's final destiny took hold of me. When the vision vanished, I called my colleagues Chernetsky and Magnus out to the vestibule and recounted my vision to them. At that time I did not yet know that the vision was of a parapsychological nature; I thought my colleagues must have seen it as well. However, to my question whether they also had seen the archbishop, they both gave a negative reply, though both affirmed that they saw my gaze directed to one side, which seemed odd to them.

Many years have since passed. Hard times have followed on hard times, but the radiant image of Archbishop John — physically robust, a God-gifted orator, fearless guardian of lawfulness, wise politician, fighter for the Orthodox Faith and the way of life blessed by the Church, defender of the injured and deprived, generous benefactor in the open and in secret, a firm but kindly teacher of youth, a man of fervent prayer for captives of the atheist power and those in need of help — is ever impressed on my memory.

His physical might was destroyed by opposing forces and their wiles, but the Lord, mindful of his good works, deigned to receive him into His mansions without lessening his earthly dignity, allowing him to serve as a bishop in the heavenly Church. This is what was revealed to me the day of his funeral."

The second vision came in the 1950's to a person who prefers to remain anonymous. This person saw Vladyka

John in old, worn, almost moss-covered vestments, though otherwise he appeared as he did in the last years of his life: with the first traces of grey in his thick beard, and the first deep wrinkles on his face. His vestments were so ancient that it was impossible to tell what color they were... some sort of brownish green with completely tarnished gold. But now Vladyka turned around and it became noticeable that Vladyka's omophorion was beginning little by little to grow brighter. At first little golden sparks begin to glitter on him, then they come together in a coil; then they grow into spots, which grow and become larger, so that the whole shoulder part of the vestment begins to shine with such a blinding, such an unearthly light, and the image of the Mother of God on it stands out in such vivid relief and in such shining brightness, that one's eyes blink. Now Vladyka again turns around and faces me; now I can see that the omophorion has grown bright in front also, only the rest of the vestments are still dark; by contrast they seem quite black. And Vladyka speaks: 'You keep wanting me to vest in new robes, but to me this one seems still good!' The whole vision lasted one minute and then dissolved into thin air.

There could have been other visions, about which we shall perhaps hear more in the future.

Looking back at Vladyka's entire life, one is struck by the fact that the faithful loved him so much, not only in Latvia — every see he occupied did not wish to let him go, fought to keep him, or tried to get him back, even resorting to extreme means.

As is clear from this description of Vladyka's life, his way of the cross began long before his death. He was subjected to searches, interrogation and arrest. His enemies tried to break him with the most refined tortures, the expectation of being shot. More than once they attempted to take his life, and finally they burnt him alive. Thus, his whole preceding life, especially after the Revolution, was a kind of preparation for suffering and a pledge of the martyr's crown.

St. John of Riga combined in his life the lofty spiritual ideals of a pastor with wide-ranging public activity (perhaps even political activity). The broad compass of his many-faceted activity used to frighten some of the faithful and elicit criticism from those not very religious. It is, however, this very broadness which can serve as a shining example of the compatibility of two seemingly different sides of life. He was both an experienced and effective church administrator, and an outstanding preacher, who united depth of feeling, clarity of thought and simplicity of expression.

In his "Panegyric to All the Holy Martyrs", St. John Chrysostom says that the martyrs are in no way inferior to the angels: "For the martyrs and the angels are distinguished only by title; they are in fact quite similar. The angels dwell in heaven; so do the martyrs. The angels are immortal and not subject to aging; the martyrs will have the same qualities. But the angels received an incorporeal nature. What of it? The martyrs were clothed with an immortal body, or, what is

greater, even before immortality their death for the sake of Christ adorned their bodies more than immortality. The heavens adorned with a multitude of stars are not so bright as the bodies of the martyrs, brightly adorned with a multitude of wounds. Thus, in dying they acquired great gain; even before immortality they received rewards, being crowned by their death... The very shortcoming of mortality became an advantage for them, for, had they not been mortal, they would not have become martyrs, so that, were it not for death, there would be no crown."

And so, the martyrs, "friends of God," now stand before the throne of the Most High and have great boldness to intercede for us. In the congregation of these friends of God, St. John of Riga also offers his prayers for his larger fatherland, Holy Rus', while not forgetting his immediate native country, Latvia. The glorification of St. John of Riga, probably the first Latvian so honored, is one more link in the universal fellowship of Orthodox saints. Our Holy Church hymns his spiritual feats together with the other New-Martyrs in these words:

The holy hierarch John of Riga, set afire by the minions of Satan whose conscience burned with fire, denounced their malice; likewise did they that were hanged: Tikhon, holy hierarch of Voronezh, the priest Alexis of Simferopol', and others wickedly slain. And they cry out to Thee, O Lord, in Thy radiant kingdom: O God our Deliverer, blessed art Thou!

[Canon to the New-Martyrs of Russia, Ode VII,  
translation from the service as published by  
the St. John of Kronstadt Press]

*Translated by Fr. German Ciuba from the Russian text of Dr.  
Ludmilla Keller, published by Holy Trinity Monastery, 1984*

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## MISSION: SEVILLE, SPAIN?

Dr. Vasilia (Rita Maria) Gonzales is moving upon retirement to Seville, Spain, and would like to contact other Orthodox Christians who may live or visit in that area with a view to drawing together a community of the faithful and perhaps, as the Lord allows, establishing there a mission community of the Church. She notes that the area, while "boasting" a synagogue, a mosque, and every conceivable variety of sectarian establishment, has not a single Orthodox Church... although there are many Orthodox people known to be there.

Dr. Gonzales may be reached in this country until mid-August at 931 Gainsborough Rd., Dayton, OH 45419; and thereafter in Spain at Calle Duque de Montemar 15; Bajo A; 41003 Sevilla, Spain.

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## A SERMON FOR THE DAY OF THE PROTECTION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN FROM THE WORKS OF ARCHBISHOP INNOCENT OF CHERSON AND TAURIDA  
(VOL. II, SPB, 1908, PP. 56-63)

That this present feast is one of the most joyful ones, for it affirms the intercession of the Mother of God on our behalf before God; that for this very reason this present day should be spent in works of piety and Christian love so that we may be worthy of the protection of the All-blessed Lady; that all who are careless concerning their salvation (unless they correct themselves) cannot have a just hope in her intercession before God — these important and necessary truths, without doubt, and more or less familiar to each of us. For this reason, let us turn our attention to something else. Let us look at the icon of the Protection of the Mother of God; perhaps we shall find some new lesson here.

Do you remember, brethren, how the marvellous occasion we are now celebrating originally occurred? In the Church of Blachernae in Constantinople, on the eve of the Lord's day, the usual vigil was being conducted. Among the others present was St. Andrew, the fool for Christ. During the chanting and prayers, at about the fourth hour of the night, this man of God suddenly beheld the Mother of God in the air between the Forerunner of Christ and John the Theologian, praying together with a great multitude of angels and saints for the human race, and covering those people who were in the church with her veil. Filled with spiritual joy, the saint turned to his friend and disciple, St. Epiphanius, and asked him: does he see the miracle? "I see, father," Epiphanius replies, "and I am filled with awe." When the others in the church learned of this miracle, all were overcome with trembling; with compunction of heart they began to thank God and glorify the Intercessress for the entire world. The pious Emperor Leo and the holy Patriarch Tarasios instituted the annual celebration of this consoling occasion.

The first thing to which we should turn our attention is the appearance of the Mother of God with choirs of angels and saints. So... we do not believe in vain that the dwellers of heaven take a great part in the events of the human world, that our elder brethren in heaven are concerned for our salvation — we fledglings upon earth! For what do they use their power and closeness to the throne of grace, if not to help us who are cast about on the sea of the storms and cares of life? And we, even with all the coldness of our earthen hearts, cannot look without some feeling on the unfortunate, and sometimes offer them help; how then can the heavenly beings remain idle spectators of our spiritual and physical poverty, and not stretch forth over us their cover of grace?

And so it is not in vain, then, that we believe that the heavenly powers are present with us in the churches! Where are they to remain more constantly, if not in that place where their King and Lord is present in a special way? We do not see them, because the radiance of heavenly glory cannot be

endured by our crude eyes. But they see us and all that we are, even our thoughts and desires. The time will come when we will see them. If we will be worthy of it, we will enter into the fair light of their company. Until that time, we must believe in their presence and with this belief visit the churches of God as often as possible. However, if we want to be in church with the angels, we must stand in church in an angelic way, setting aside all worldly care. Otherwise, even in paradise the tempter can show himself, and even in paradise we can deserve to hear that terrible saying: You will die with death [Gen 2:17].

The second item which deserves our devout attention in the revelation of the Mother of God is the appearance in which she presented herself in the air to the saints who beheld her. As the Mother of the heavenly King, she could appear seated upon a throne and from its heights sending down her blessings on mankind. But she appears at prayer! Why so? So that we may realize that there is one supreme Master of all in heaven and on earth, in time and eternity: God the Father! There is one Redeemer, Proclaimer of the will of God, Lawgiver and Judge, able to save and to condemn [Jas 4:12]: God the Son! One Consoler and Bestower of the gifts of grace, Sanctifier of repentant sinners: God the Holy Spirit! And what is the All-holy Virgin? She is the very first recipient of grace, and the first intercessor at His throne for mankind. Whoever lifts his prayers to her in this spirit will act in keeping with her desire. On the other hand, the honoring of her name, when taken to excess in comparison with the name of God, to the point of eclipsing the reverence we are obliged to show to our Creator and Redeemer, will be not an honor, but an offense, for the one who on earth called herself "the handmaiden of the Lord" [Lk 1:38], who undoubtedly has not left off her humility even in heaven. "No," the angel once said to the Apostle John who had apparently mistaken him for the God-Man, and who was going to honor him with divine worship; "No; I am your servant; bow down to God" [Rev 22:9]. The same can be said with even more force by the All-holy Virgin to anyone who, out of his ignorance, would offer her worship equal to the Divinity.

But do we need to fear excess in our fervor for the All-holy Virgin? Alas, in our times we must rather be afraid because of its dearth! The Mother herself will pass on to the Son what belongs to Him. We must better learn from her that of which we have the greatest need — prayer.

If in heaven nothing can be done without prayer, if even for the More honorable than the Cherubim and the Incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim prayer is needful — then how utterly indispensable it is for us, brethren! How much is lost by those who are careless concerning this gift of

God! And how many are careless! There are people who do not pray at all. Others pray, but only under compulsion, with force and heaviness. Prayer seems to them to be a weighty tribute — work for their master. But whose fault is it that the manna of heaven has turned bitter in our mouths? True prayer is sweet and nourishing, and there is not a single person among those who pray who has not experienced this sweetness. If prayer becomes bitter, this is because our spiritual taste is spoiled. It is hard for us to raise up our eyes to heaven, because they are full of the dust of earthly anxieties. A person dying of hunger cries out demanding food, as soon as he sees anyone; a drowning man reaches out even for inanimate objects; likewise, a person experiencing spiritual hunger automatically opens his mouth in prayer; the person who sees himself in the abyss of sin involuntarily raises his eyes and hands to heaven.

“How can we arouse the sense of this hunger — of this danger — in our selves? How can we force ourselves to see our need of God?” By paying strict attention to yourself and to your life. Try to think for a few hours — I don’t dare say days — about how we pass our time in this life, why we have appeared in the world, what is awaiting us where we will go afterwards. It is impossible that such thoughts not end with turning one’s eyes to heaven, with a sigh of heart before the One Who knows all, Whose right hand holds our existence and life. The more frequently we repeat this good experiment and think about our appointment in eternity, examine our life and see our sins and impurity, the more often we will feel the need of help and heavenly compassion. Your prayer will become more needful and pleasant, and with time you will find the sacred disposition always to be in the presence of God, which the apostle calls prayer without ceasing [I Thess 5:18].

Now let us look at those people who were found worthy to behold the Protection of the All-holy Virgin. In the Blachernae church, there were many people. An emperor was there, who for his erudition was called “the Wise”. A patriarch was there, who later for his holy life was numbered among the saints. There were famous and wealthy persons present. But none of them saw what was transpiring in the air. Only Andrew and Epiphanius were granted to be witnesses of the miracle. These were the least of the people, despised by many during their earthly lifetime. Thus heaven is high and open for every worthy person, even if he be nobody among men!

From the circumstances of the revelation, it is not even clear whether it was revealed from on high in some manner to the saints who beheld it, or whether the special power of God in this instance simply opened their spiritual eyes. A life of asceticism and constant self-denial had refined their spiritual senses so that the presence of the heavenly beings could not be hidden from them. This often happens to great ascetics; few among them do not have a gift of spiritual vision, which belongs to all men; but in those who are not

reborn it is obscured by the weight of the flesh.

It is particularly noteworthy that St. Andrew was a fool for Christ — that is, for the sake of Christ he feigned madness. And it was this man out of his mind who first beheld what surpasses every mind. We will draw no conclusions discrediting the human mind and its abilities which were given to us by God to be the adornment of our soul. We will not derive any unpleasant conclusions regarding human knowledge, which also has its source in God and which, when consecrated by grace not only serves our well-being on earth, but assists us on the way to heaven as well. However, how can we pass over something noted and emphasized in the word of God with such force: that human wisdom, because of its almost constant wanderings, is considered folly before God [I Cor 1:20], and is therefore condemned to destruction [I Cor 1:19]. There is something in earthly wisdom which makes it little capable of receiving enlightenment from on high; in the fallen human mind, there is a certain dark side which is inimical to heaven. What is this? What makes earthly wisdom, which on its own must be praiseworthy, become opposed to God? Why is it that human reason, which is godly in and of itself, becomes so godless? Where is the source of evil? In what the apostle calls the “puffing up of knowledge” [I Cor 8:1] or haughtiness. When filled with the light of knowledge, the mind naturally begins to shine. But this radiance, because of the diseased state of the mental eyes of a fallen man, more often than not blinds him, and instead of seeing with gratitude and humility the light in the Light of God, he begins to think that the radiance given off is something of his very own. From this come dangerous feelings of self-content and forgetting his own poverty, then pretending to know all, and opposition to divine revelation and mysteries; then forgetfulness of God, neglecting the Church, and disregard for the good order of society. Then the weakening of the conscience and enslavement to sensuality; then doubting things sacred, and even what comprises the true dignity of human nature. People who begin by thinking they know everything, that they are superior to all, reduce themselves to the same level as the dumb beasts! Thus earthly wisdom becomes foolish and self-destructs even before it is destroyed by the God of knowledge [I Kgs 2:3].

After this, is it surprising that such wisdom is condemned to destruction? Even though the procession from knowledge to iniquity is unnatural on its own — for earthly light should lead to the Light of heaven, man’s mind should turn man to the mind of God — because of the corruption of men, almost always the opposite happens. And so, to avoid a fruitless exposition of what there is in human wisdom that deserves to be spared and what does not, the rule has been developed for those who wish to seek their salvation in God to reject earthly wisdom and become fools for the sake of Christ. If any man among you consider himself to be wise in this age, let him be a fool, in order to be most wise [I Cor 3:18]. Agreeing or not



agreeing to reject one's own wisdom is a condition of salvation, and is also at the same time a genuine test of whether one's wisdom is true or false. He that has true wisdom will immediately exchange it for the wisdom which is bestowed by grace; he is always prepared to enslave his mind in obedience to the mind of God. But a person whose wisdom suffers from being puffed up finds it very difficult to reject it. This rejection can be either secret or open. We see it openly in the fools for Christ: their total rejection of the human mind is a very lofty struggle which is accessible only to a few — not only because willfully acting mad is very hard for our self-loving heart, but also because here a person must face two dangers: betrayal of his sacred vow of foolishness for Christ, and violating the obligation to love one's neighbor, by scandalizing him, not giving him proper advice, or helping in some other way.

But one can be foolish for the sake of Christ and not appear to be totally mad, by taking advantage of all the wealth of human wisdom. The apostle Paul was foolish for Christ's sake [I Cor 4:10], but he also instructed philosophers in the Areopagus. Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom were luminaries of their age, and yet they were not alien to the folly of Christ. The person who is guided by humility regards all his knowledge first as an undeserved gift from God, and thus he has no reason to be puffed up. Moreover, earthly wisdom itself, when one uses

it properly, soon leads a man to the limits of human knowledge; being unable to go beyond, and yet sensing the need to go further, it thus imparts faith to its disciple — that is, makes place for the sacred foolishness of God [I Cor 1:25].

Before such wise persons in the eyes of the world, those at the same time foolish in the eyes of God, the mysteries of the spiritual world were revealed, as their accounts of their lives tell us, and with the same ease as previously to those who for the sake of Christ appeared to the world to be totally out of their minds.

We can touch also on certain circumstances surrounding the miraculous appearance of the All-holy Virgin, which we now commemorate. For instance, why was the vision not beheld by such a person as St. Tarasios? Why was St. Andrew filled with joy as he beheld the vision, while St. Epiphanius more with fear? But we must leave that for each of you to ponder on in his private thoughts. The purpose of Christian instructions must not be to exhaust the topic under discussion, but also to arouse the thought processes of the listeners themselves. The person who adds his own pondering to what he has heard makes much of a little; but the person who only listens and does not think about it at all obtains no benefit even from very much.

And so, in place of a conclusion to my sermon, honor my request that you continue it in your own reflections. In this good endeavor, may the Lord's blessing be with you all. Amen.

## MENAION SERVICES

Continuing its commitment to provide liturgical materials for the Church and private prayers, the collection of Menaion services, Akathist hymns, and related service materials available from the Press has grown steadily. Since the last comprehensive listing in *Living Orthodoxy*, the size of the collection has grown from less than 100 services to well over 200. These services are all typeset and photocopied on 8.5x11" mylar-edged (rip-proof) 3-hole punched paper for collection in ring or post binders. All are available for retail or wholesale (inquire concerning terms) purchase. Future releases may be acquired immediately upon release, with considerable savings in cost, by the establishment of a deposit account (see details at end of listing). Please see below for ordering details. New additions are bold-faced.

| SN  | DateCode | Title                        | pp. | Cost   |
|-----|----------|------------------------------|-----|--------|
| 44  | 00.00 S  | All Saints of Russia         | 11  | \$4.35 |
| 163 | 00.02    | Common Theotokia             | 14  | 5.40   |
| 166 | 00.03    | Supp. Svc for Those in Error | 4   | 1.90   |
| 167 | 00.04Ak  | In Time of Trouble           | 5   | 2.25   |
| 171 | 00.05Ak  | Sweetest Lord Jesus          | 4   | 1.90   |
| 190 | 00.06    | Sun of Orthodoxy (Anathemas) | 8   | 3.30   |
| 206 | 00.07    | All SS Mt Athos              | 12  | 4.70   |
| 160 | 01.01Ak  | Basil the Great              | 8   | 3.30   |
| 168 | 01.02    | Seraphim of Sarov            | 17  | 6.45   |
| 61  | 01.04    | Synaxis of the 70/Theotistus | 12  | 4.70   |
| 122 | 01.09    | Polyeuctus                   | 7   | 2.95   |
| 123 | 01.11    | Theodosius                   | 11  | 4.35   |
| 5   | 01.16    | Chains of St. Peter          | 4   | 1.96   |
| 1   | 01.19    | Mark of Ephesus              | 8   | 3.30   |

Suffix "Ak" indicates an Akathist hymn; "S" indicates a service used on Sunday following date; many services are used on more than one date, but are listed under only one of these.

|            |              |                                    |          |             |
|------------|--------------|------------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| 2          | 01.22S       | NewMartyrs of Russia               | 10       | 4.00        |
| 124        | 01.26        | Xenophon et al.                    | 4        | 1.90        |
| 125        | 01.27        | Trans of Relics of John Chrys.     | 15       | 5.75        |
| 3          | 02.01        | Bridget of Ireland                 | 6        | 2.60        |
| 49         | 02.03        | Simeon & Anna                      | 7        | 2.95        |
| 156        | 02.05        | Theodosius                         | 10       | 4.00        |
| 157        | 02.05Ak      | Theodosius                         | 6        | 2.60        |
| 189        | 02.06        | Photios                            | 14       | 5.40        |
| 194        | 02.08        | Theodore Stratelites; Zechariah    | 11       | 4.35        |
| 128        | 02.09        | Nicephorus                         | 5        | 2.25        |
| 129        | 02.10        | Charalampus                        | 4        | 1.90        |
| 130        | 02.11        | Blaise                             | 4        | 1.90        |
| 131        | 02.12        | Meletius                           | 4        | 1.90        |
| 135        | 02.13        | Martinian                          | 4        | 1.90        |
| 188        | 02.17        | Theodore Tyro                      | 5        | 2.25        |
| 134        | 02.18        | Pope Leo                           | 4        | 1.90        |
| 133        | 02.19        | Ap. Archippus                      | 3        | 1.55        |
| 132        | 02.20        | Leo of Catania                     | 4        | 1.90        |
| 138        | 02.21        | Timothy/Eustace                    | 6        | 2.60        |
| 4          | 02.22        | MM Gate of Eugenius                | 4        | 1.90        |
| 6          | 02.23        | Polycarp                           | 3        | 1.55        |
| 7          | 02.24        | 1st & 2nd Fndgs of Head of SJB     | 6        | 2.60        |
| 139        | 02.25        | Tarasius                           | 4        | 1.90        |
| 53         | 02.26        | Porphyrius of Gaza                 | 3        | 1.55        |
| 136        | 02.27        | Procopius                          | 3        | 1.55        |
| 137        | 02.28        | Basil the Confessor                | 3        | 1.55        |
| 207        | 03.01        | Eudocia                            | 4        | 1.90        |
| 51         | 03.02        | Theodotus                          | 3        | 1.55        |
| <b>223</b> | <b>03.02</b> | <b>Reigning Kolomna Icon Theot</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>3.30</b> |
| 158        | 03.02Ak      | Reigning Theotokos                 | 7        | 2.95        |



|                |                                 |    |      |                |                                 |    |      |
|----------------|---------------------------------|----|------|----------------|---------------------------------|----|------|
| 142 ...03.03   | Eutropius et al.                | 4  | 1.90 | 229 ...07.10   | 45 MM Nicopolis                 | 3  | 1.55 |
| 8 ...03.04     | Gerasimus of the Jordan         | 3  | 1.55 | 230 ...07.10   | Dep Robe Savior                 | 8  | 3.30 |
| 10 ...03.05    | M Conon                         | 3  | 1.55 | 57 ...07.11    | Euphemia, Olga                  | 9  | 3.65 |
| 9 ...03.06     | 42MM of Amorium                 | 4  | 1.90 | 150 ...07.11Ak | Olga                            | 7  | 2.95 |
| 12 ...03.07    | HM Cherson                      | 3  | 1.55 | 159 ...07.13   | Gabriel/Stephen                 | 8  | 3.30 |
| 13 ...03.07Ak  | Theot. Surety of Sinners        | 7  | 2.95 | 58 ...07.13S   | Fathers of the 6 Councils       | 9  | 3.65 |
| 11 ...03.08    | Theophylactus of Nicomedia      | 3  | 1.55 | 161 ...07.15Ak | Vladimir the Great              | 6  | 2.60 |
| 14 ...03.09    | 40MM of Sebaste                 | 8  | 3.30 | 60 ...07.20    | Elijah                          | 13 | 5.05 |
| 15 ...03.10    | M Codratus                      | 3  | 1.55 | 62 ...07.20Ak  | Elijah                          | 7  | 2.95 |
| 48 ...03.11    | Sophronius                      | 4  | 1.90 | 147 ...07.22Ak | Mary Magdalene                  | 7  | 2.95 |
| 16 ...03.12    | Theophanes Conf. of Sigriana    | 4  | 1.90 | 41 ...07.23    | Pochaev Icon                    | 9  | 3.65 |
| 17 ...03.13    | Nicophorus Pat. of Const.       | 3  | 1.55 | 59 ...07.23    | Trophimus et al.                | 3  | 1.55 |
| 224 ...03.14Ak | Benedict                        | 6  | 2.60 | 231 ...07.24   | Christina                       | 6  | 2.60 |
| 18 ...03.14    | Benedict of Nursia              | 3  | 1.55 | 169 ...07.25   | Anna; Olympia & Eupraxia        | 8  | 3.30 |
| 19 ...03.15    | M Agapius & 6 Comp.             | 3  | 1.55 | 63 ...07.27    | Panteleimon                     | 9  | 3.65 |
| 20 ...03.16    | M Sabinas                       | 3  | 1.55 | 64 ...07.27Ak  | Panteleimon                     | 7  | 2.95 |
| 22 ...03.17A   | Alexis                          | 4  | 1.90 | 219 ...07.28   | Pitirim of Tambov               | 12 | 4.70 |
| 23 ...03.17Ak  | Alexis                          | 6  | 2.60 | 220 ...07.28Ak | Pitirim of Tambov               | 5  | 2.25 |
| 21 ...03.17P   | Patrick of Ireland              | 4  | 1.90 | 65 ...07.30    | Silas & Silvanus                | 4  | 1.90 |
| 24 ...03.18    | Cyril of Jerusalem              | 3  | 1.55 | 221 ...07.31   | Ff Proc Cross; Eudocimus        | 7  | 2.95 |
| 143 ...03.19   | Chrysanthus & Daria             | 3  | 1.55 | 67 ...08.02    | Stephen                         | 8  | 3.30 |
| 25 ...03.20    | MM Mon. of St. Sabbas           | 4  | 1.90 | 68 ...08.03    | Isaacus et al.                  | 4  | 1.90 |
| 26 ...03.21    | James of Catania                | 3  | 1.55 | 173 ...08.08   | Emilian                         | 7  | 2.95 |
| 210 ...03.22   | Basil of Ancyra                 | 4  | 1.90 | 69 ...08.10    | Laurence                        | 7  | 2.95 |
| 27 ...03.23    | M Nikon & 200 disc.             | 3  | 1.55 | 70 ...08.13    | Tikhon                          | 9  | 3.65 |
| 211 ...03.24   | Forefeast Annunciation          | 4  | 1.90 | 71 ...08.16    | Translation of the Holy Napkin  | 13 | 5.05 |
| 28 ...03.27    | Matrona of Thessalonica         | 3  | 1.55 | 72 ...08.17    | Myron                           | 6  | 2.60 |
| 222 ...03.28   | Hilarion; Stephen               | 6  | 2.60 | 75 ...08.20    | Samuel                          | 7  | 2.95 |
| 212 ...03.29   | Mark/Cyril                      | 3  | 1.55 | 170 ...08.22   | Agathonicus/Luppus              | 10 | 4.00 |
| 29 ...03.30    | John Climacus                   | 4  | 1.90 | 73 ...08.24    | Eutyches                        | 4  | 1.90 |
| 37 ...03.31    | Iveron Icon                     | 8  | 3.30 | 76 ...08.26    | Adrian & Natalia                | 4  | 1.90 |
| 172 ...03.31Ak | Iveron Icon                     | 6  | 2.60 | 77 ...08.26Ak  | Adrian & Natalia                | 6  | 2.60 |
| 213 ...03.31   | Hypatius                        | 4  | 1.90 | 78 ...08.27    | Poemen                          | 4  | 1.90 |
| 30 ...04.01    | Mary of Egypt                   | 4  | 1.90 | 79 ...08.31    | Deposition of Sash of Theotokos | 7  | 2.95 |
| 31 ...04.03    | Nicetas of Medikion             | 4  | 1.90 | 180 ...09.01   | Indiction/Symeon                | 14 | 5.40 |
| 214 ...04.05   | Theodulus/Agathopodes           | 3  | 1.55 | 84 ...09.03    | Anthimus; Theoctistus           | 7  | 2.95 |
| 215 ...04.06   | Eutychius                       | 4  | 1.90 | 42 ...09.03    | Edward of England               | 7  | 2.95 |
| 216 ...04.07   | George of Mitylene              | 3  | 1.55 | 80 ...09.04    | Joasaph                         | 10 | 4.00 |
| 217 ...04.08   | Herodion et al.                 | 3  | 1.55 | 85 ...09.04Ak  | Joasaph                         | 6  | 2.60 |
| 32 ...04.20    | Anastasius the Sinaite          | 3  | 1.55 | 181 ...09.05   | Zacharias & Elizabeth           | 12 | 4.70 |
| 225 ...04.25   | Mark                            | 8  | 3.30 | 86 ...09.06    | Miracle of Archangel Michael    | 8  | 3.30 |
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